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THE

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

BY THE

REVD. ALBAN BUTLER

VOL 2



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THOMAS RICHARDSON & SON,
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THE

LIVES

OF

THE FATHERS, MARTYRS,

AND OTHER

PRINCIPAL SAINTS,

COMPILED FROM

ORIGINAL MONUMENTS, AND OTHER AUTHENTIC RECORDS

ILLUSTRATED WITH

THE REMARKS OF JUDICIOUS MODERN CRITICS AND HISTORIANS.

BY THE REV. ALBAN BUTLER.

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ST. IGNATIUS, BISHOP OF ANTIOCH, M.

From his genuine epistles; also from the acts of his martyrdom, St. Chrys.

A. D. 107.

ST. IGNATIUS, surnamed Theophorus,[1] a word implying a divine or heavenly person, was a zealous convert and an intimate disciple of St. John the Evangelist, as his acts assure us; also the apostles SS. Peter and Paul, who united their labours in planting the faith at Antioch.[2] It was by their direction that he succeeded Evodius in the government of that important see, as we are told by St. Chrysostom,[3] who represents him as a perfect model of virtue in that station, in which he continued upwards of forty years. During the persecution of Domitian, St. Ignatius defended his flock by prayer, fasting, and daily preaching the word of God. He rejoiced to see peace restored to the church on the death of that empe-

1 The accent placed on the penultima of Θεοφορος, as the word is written in the saint's acts, denotes it of an active signification, *one that carrieth God*; but of the passive, *carried of God*, if placed on the antepenultima.

2 St. Gregory tells us, (l. 4. ep. 37,) that he was a disciple of St. Peter. The apostolic constitutions add, also of St. Paul, (l. 7. c. 46.) We are assured by St. Chrysostom (Hom. in St. Ignat.) and Theodoret, (Dial. 1. p. 33,) that he was made bishop by the direction of the apostles, and by the imposition of their hands. St. Chrysostom says, that St. Peter appointed him bishop to govern the see of Antioch, when he quitted it himself; which seems also to be affirmed by Origen, (in Luc. Hom. 6,) St. Athanasius, (de Syn. p. 922,) Facundus, &c. Baronius thinks he was left by St. Peter, bishop of the Jewish converts, and became bishop also of the Gentiles in 68: for Eusebius (Hist. l. 3. c. 22. 36,) says, that St. Evodius succeeded St. Peter at Antioch; he adds in his chronicle, in the year 43, that he died in 68, and was succeeded by St. Ignatius. Some think there is a mistake in the chronicle of Eusebius, as to the year of the death of Evodius, and that this happened before the martyrdom of St. Peter, who appointed St. Ignatius his successor. See Cotelier, not. p. 299. Tillem. not. t. 2. p. 619. The Greek Menæa mentions Evodius on the 7th of September.

3 Hom. in St. Ignat. t. 2. p. 592. See also Theodoret, Dial. 1. p. 33.

ror, so far as this calm might be beneficial to those committed to his charge: but was apprehensive that he had not attained to the perfect love of Christ, nor the dignity of a true disciple, because he had not as yet been called to seal the truth of his religion with his blood, an honour he somewhat impatiently longed for. The peaceable reign of Nerva lasted only fifteen months. The governors of several provinces renewed the persecution under Trajan his successor; and it appears from Trajan's letter to Pliny the younger, governor of Bithynia, that the Christians were ordered to be put to death, if accused; but it was forbid to make any inquiry after them. That emperor sullied his clemency and bounty and his other pagan virtues, by incest with his sister, by an excessive vanity, which procured him the surname of Parietmus, (or dauber of every wall with the inscriptions of his name and actions,) and by blind superstition, which rendered him a persecutor of the true followers of virtue, out of a notion of gratitude to his imaginary deities, especially after his victories over the Daci and Scythians in 101 and 105. In the year 106, which was the ninth of his reign, he set out for the East on an expedition against the Parthians, and made his entry into Antioch on the 7th of January, 107, with the pomp of a triumph. His first concern was about the affair of religion and worship of the gods, and for this reason he resolved to compel the Christians either to acknowledge their divinity and sacrifice to them, or suffer death in case of refusal.

Ignatius, as a courageous soldier, being concerned only for his flock, willingly suffered himself to be taken and carried before Trajan, who thus accosted him: "Who art thou, wicked demon, that durst transgress my commands, and persuade others to perish?" The saint answered, "No one calls Theophorus a wicked demon."

Trajan said, "Who is Theophorus?" Ignatius answered, "He who carrieth Christ in his breast." Trajan replied, "And do not we seem to thee to bear the gods in our breasts, whom we have assisting us against our enemies?" Ignatius said, "You err in calling those gods who are no better than devils: for there is only one God, who made heaven and earth, and all things that are in them: and one Jesus Christ his only Son, into whose kingdom I earnestly desire to be admitted." Trajan said, "Do not you mean him that was crucified under Pontius Pilate?" Ignatius answered, "The very same, who by his death has crucified with sin its author, who overcame the malice of the devils, and has enabled those, who bear him in their heart, to trample on them." Trajan said, "Dost thou carry about Christ within thee?" Ignatius replied, "Yes; for it is written, *I will dwell and walk in them.*"[1] Then Trajan dictated the following sentence: "It is our will that Ignatius, who saith that he carrieth the crucified man within himself, be bound and conducted to Rome, to be devoured there by wild beasts for the entertainment of the people." The holy martyr hearing this sentence, cried out with joy, "I thank thee, O Lord, for vouchsafing to honour me with this token of perfect love for thee, and to be bound with chains of iron in imitation of thy apostle Paul, for thy sake." Having said this, and prayed for the church and recommended it with tears to God, he joyfully put on the chains, and was hurried away by a savage troop of soldiers to be conveyed to Rome. His inflamed desire of laying down his life for Christ made him embrace his sufferings with great joy.

On his arrival at Seleucia, a sea-port, about sixteen miles from Antioch, he was put on board

[1] 2 Cor. v. 16.

a ship, which was to coast the southern and western parts of Asia Minor. Why this route was pitched upon, consisting of so many windings, preferable to a more direct passage from Seleucia to Rome, is not known; probably to render the terror of his punishment the more extensive and of the greater force, to deter men from embracing and persevering in the faith: but providence seems to have ordained it for the comfort and edification of many churches. Several Christians of Antioch, taking a shorter way, got to Rome before him, where they waited his arrival. He was accompanied thither from Syria, by Reus, Philo a deacon, and Agathopodus, who seem to have wrote these acts of his martyrdom. He was guarded night and day, both by sea and land, by ten soldiers whom he called ten leopards, on account of their inhumanity and merciless usage; who, the kinder he was to them, were the more fierce and cruel to him. This voyage, however, gave him the opportunity of confirming in faith and piety the several churhes he saw on his route; giving them the strictest caution against heresies and schism, and recommending to them an inviolable attachment to the tradition of the apostles. St. Chrysostom adds, that he taught them admirably to despise the present life, to love only the good things to come, and never to fear any temporal evils whatever. The faithful flocked from the several churches he came near, to see him, and to render him all the service in their power, hoping to receive benefit from the plenitude of his benediction. The cities of Asia besides deputing to him their bishops and priests to express their veneration for him, sent also deputies in their name to bear him company the remainder of his journey; so that he says he had many churches with him. So great was his fervour and desire of suffering, that by the fatigues and length of the voyage, which was a very bad

one, he appeared the stronger and more courageous. On their reaching Smyrna, he was suffered to go ashore, which he did, with great joy, to salute St. Polycarp, who had been his fellow-disciple under St. John the Evangelist. Their conversation was upon topics suitable to their character, and St. Polycarp felicitated him on his chains and sufferings in so good a cause. At Smyrna he was met by deputies of several churches, who were sent to salute him. Those from Ephesus were Onesimus the bishop, Burrhus the deacon, Crocus, Euplus, and Fronto. From Magnesia in Lydia, Damas the bishop, Bassus and Apollo, priests, and Sotio deacon. From Tralles, also in Lydia, Polybius the bishop. From Smyrna St. Ignatius wrote four letters: in that to the church of Ephesus, he commends the bishop Onesimus and the piety and concord of the people, and their zeal against all heresies, and exhorts them to glorify God all manner of ways: to be subject, in unanimity, to their bishop and priests, to assemble as often as possible with them in public prayer, by which the power of Satan is weakened: to oppose only meekness to anger, humility to boasting, prayers to curses and reproaches, and to suffer all injuries without murmuring. He says, that because they are spiritual, and perform all they do in a spiritual manner, that all, even their ordinary actions, are spiritualized, because they do all in Jesus Christ. That he ought to have been admonished by them, but his charity would not suffer him to be silent: wherefore he prevents them, by admonishing first, that both might meet in the will of God. He bids them not be solicitous to speak, but to live well, and to edify others by their actions; and recommends himself and his widow-church of Antioch to their prayers. Himself he calls their outcast, yet declares that he is ready to be immolated for their sake, and says they were persons who had found mercy, but he

a condemned man: they were strengthened in grace, but he struggling in the midst of dangers. He calls them fellow-travellers in the road to God, which is charity, and says they bore God and Christ in their breasts, and were his temples, embellished with all virtues, and that he exulted exceedingly for the honour of being made worthy to write to them, and rejoice in God with them: for setting a true value on the life to come, they loved nothing but God alone. Speaking of heretics, he says, that he who corrupts the faith for which Christ died, will go into unquenchable fire, and also he who heareth him. It is observed by him that God concealed from the devil three mysteries: the virginity of Mary, her bringing forth, and the death of the Lord: and he calls the Eucharist, the medicine of immortality, the antidote against death, by which we always live in Christ. "Remember me, as I pray that Jesus Christ be mindful of you. Pray for the church of Syria, from whence I am carried in chains to Rome, being the last of the faithful who are there—Farewell in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ our common hope." The like instructions he repeats with a new and most moving turn of thought, in his letters to the churches of Magnesia, and of the Trallians, inculcates the greatest abhorrence of schism and heresy, and begs their prayers for himself and his church in Syria, of which he is not worthy to be called a member, being the last of them.[1] His fourth letter was written to the Christians of Rome. The saint knew the all-powerful efficacy of the prayers of the saints, and feared lest they should obtain of God his deliverance from death. He therefore besought St. Polycarp and others at Smyrna, to join their prayers with his, that the cruelty of the wild beasts might quickly rid the world of him,

1 See *Note*, page 26.

that he might be presented before Jesus Christ. With this view he wrote to the faithful at Rome, to beg that they would not endeavour to obtain of God that the beasts might spare him as they had several other martyrs; which might induce the people to release him, and so disappoint him of his crown.

The ardour of divine love which the saint breathes throughout this letter is as inflamed as the subject is extraordinary. In it he writes, "I fear your charity lest it prejudice me. For it is easy for you to do what you please; but it will be difficult for me to attain unto God if you spare me. I shall never have such an opportunity of enjoying God: nor can you, if yé shall now be silent, ever be entitled to the honour of a better work. For if ye be silent in my behalf, I shall be made partaker of God; but if ye love my body, I shall have my course to run again. Therefore, a greater kindness you cannot do me, than to suffer me to be sacrificed unto God, whilst the altar is now ready; that so becoming a choir in love, in your hymns ye may give thanks to the Father by Jesus Christ, that God has vouchsafed to bring me, the bishop of Syria, from the East unto the West, to pass out of the world unto God, that I may rise again unto him. Ye have never envied any one. Ye have taught others. I desire therefore that you will firmly observe that which in your instructions you have prescribed to others. Only pray for me, that God would give me both inward and outward strength, that I may not only say, but do: that I may not only be called a Christian, but be found one: for if I shall be found a Christian, I may then deservedly be called one; and be thought faithful when I shall no longer appear to the world. Nothing is good that is seen. A Christian is not a work of opinion, but of greatness, when he is hated by the world. I write to the churches, and signify to them all,

that I am willing to die for God, unless you hinder me. I beseech you that you show not an unseasonable good-will towards me. Suffer me to be the food of wild beasts, whereby I may attain unto God: I am the wheat of God, and I am to be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ. Rather entice the beasts to my sepulchre, that they may leave nothing of my body, that being dead, I may not be troublesome to any. Then shall I be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world shall not see so much as my body. Pray to Christ for me, that in this I may become a sacrifice to God. I do not as Peter and Paul, command you; they were apostles, I am an inconsiderable person: they were free, I am even yet a slave. But if I suffer I shall then become the freeman of Jesus Christ, and shall arise a freeman in him. Now I am in bonds for him, I learn to have no worldly or vain desires. From Syria even unto Rome I fight with wild beasts both by sea and land, both night and day, bound to ten leopards, that is, to a band of soldiers; who are the worse for kind treatment. But I am the more instructed by their injuries; yet am I not thereby justified.[1] I earnestly wish for the wild beasts that are prepared for me, which I heartily desire may soon despatch me; whom I will entice to devour me entirely and suddenly, and not serve me as they have done some whom they have been afraid to touch; but if they are unwilling to meddle with me, I will even compel them to it.[2] Pardon me this matter, I know what is good for me. Now I begin to be a disciple. So that I have no desire after any thing visible or invisible, that I may attain to Jesus Christ. Let

1 1 Cor. iv. 4.

2 Not that he would really excite the beasts to despatch him, without a special inspiration, because that would have been self-murder: but this expresses the courage and desire of his soul.

fire, or the cross, or the concourse of wild beasts, let cutting or tearing of the flesh, let breaking of bones and cutting off limbs, let the shattering in pieces of my whole body, and all the wicked torments of the devil come upon me, so I may but attain to Jesus Christ. All the compass of the earth, and the kingdoms of this world will profit me nothing. It is better for me to die for the sake of Jesus Christ, than to rule unto the ends of the earth. Him I seek who died for us: Him I desire who rose again for us. He is my gain at hand. Pardon me, brethren; be not my hindrance in attaining to life, for Jesus Christ is the life of the faithful: whilst I desire to belong to God, do not ye yield me back to the world. Suffer me to partake of the pure light. When I shall be there, I shall be a man of God. Permit me to imitate the passion of Christ my God. If any one has him within himself, let him consider what I desire, and let him have compassion on me, as knowing how I am straitened. The prince of this world endeavours to snatch me away, and to change the desire with which I burn of being united to God. Let none of you who are present attempt to succour me. Be rather on my side, that is, on God's. Entertain no desires of the world, having Jesus Christ in your mouths. Let no envy find place in your breasts. Even were I myself to entreat you when present, do not obey me; but rather believe what I now signify to you by letter. Though I am alive at the writing of this, yet my desire is to die. My love is crucified. The fire that is within me does not crave any water; but being alive and springing within, says, Come to the Father. I take no pleasure in the food of corruption, nor in the pleasure of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, and for drink, his blood, which is incorruptible charity. I desire to live no longer according to men; and this will be if you are

willing. Be then willing, that you may be accepted by God. Pray for me that I may possess God. If I shall suffer, ye have loved me: If I shall be rejected, ye have hated me. Remember in your prayers the church of Syria, which now enjoys God for its shepherd instead of me. I am ashamed to be called of their number, for I am not worthy, being the last of them, and an abortive: but through mercy I have obtained that I shall be something, if I enjoy God." The martyr gloried in his sufferings as in the highest honour, and regarded his chains as most precious jewels. His soul was raised above either the love or the fear of any thing on earth, and, as St. Chrysostom says, he could lay down his life with as much ease and willingness as another man could put off his clothes. He even wished every step of his journey to meet with the wild beasts; and though that death was most shocking and barbarous, and presented the most frightful ideas, sufficient to startle the firmest resolution; yet it was incapable of making the least impression upon his courageous soul. The perfect mortification of his affections appears from his heavenly meekness; and he expressed how perfectly he was dead to himself and the world, living only to God in his heart, by that admirable sentence, "My love is crucified."[1] To signify, as he explains himself afterward, that his appetites and desires were crucified to the world, and to all the lusts and pleasures of it.

The guards pressed the saint to leave Smyrna, that they might arrive at Rome before the shows were over. He rejoiced exceedingly at their hurry, desiring impatiently to enjoy God by martyrdom. They sailed to Troas, where he was informed that God had restored peace to his church at Antioch: which freed him from the anxiety

[1] Ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται

he had been under, fearing lest there should be some weak ones in his flock. At Troas he wrote three other letters, one to the church of Philadelphia, and a second to the Smyrnæans, in which he calls the heretics who denied Christ to have assumed true flesh, and the Eucharist to be his flesh, wild beasts in human shape; and forbids all communication with them, only allowing them to be prayed for, that they may be brought to repentance, which is very difficult. His last letter is addressed to St. Polycarp, whom he exhorts to labour for Christ without sparing himself; for the measure of his labour will be that of his reward.[1] The style of the martyr every where follows the impulses of a burning charity, rather than the rules of grammar, and his pen is never able to express the sublimity of his thoughts. In every word there is a fire and a beauty not to be paralleled: every thing is full of a deep sense. He every where breathes the most profound humility and contempt of himself as an abortive, and the last of men; a great zeal for the church, and abhorrence of schisms; the most ardent love of God and his neighbour, and tenderness for his own flock: begging the prayers of all the churches in its behalf to whom he wrote, and intreating of several that they would send an embassy to his church at Antioch, to comfort and exhort them. The seven epistles of this apostolic father,

1 See an account of these two last in the life of St. Polycarp. Orsi draws a proof in favour of the supremacy of the see of Rome, from the title which St. Ignatius gives it at the head of his epistle. In directing his other letters, and saluting other churches, he only writes, "To the blessed church which is at Ephesus:" Τῇ ἁγίᾳ ἐν Ἐφεσῳ "at Magnesia near the Mæander: at Tralles: at Philadelphia: at Smyrna:" but in that to the Romans he changes his style, and addresses his letter, "To the beloved church which is enlightened, (by the will of Him who ordaineth all things which are according to the charity of Jesus Christ our God,) which presides in the country of the Romans, ἥτις προκάθηται ἐν τοπῳ χὸρου Ρωμαίων, worthy of God, most adorned, justly happy, most commended, fitly regulated and governed, most chaste, and presiding in charity, &c."

the same which were quoted by St. Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, St. Athanasius, St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Gildas, &c. are published genuine by Usher, Vossius, Cotelier, &c. and in English by Archbishop Wake, in 1710.

St. Ignatius, not being allowed time to write to the other churches of Asia, commissioned St. Polycarp to do it for him. From Troas they sailed to Neapolis in Macedonia, and went thence to Philippi, from which place they crossed Macedonia, and Epirus on foot; but took shipping again at Epidamnum in Dalmatia, and sailing by Rhegium and Puteoli were carried by a strong gale into the Roman port, the great station of the navy near Ostia, at the mouth of the Tiber, sixteen miles from Rome. He would gladly have landed at Puteoli, to have traced St. Paul's steps, by going on foot from that place to Rome, but the wind rendered it impracticable. On landing, the authors of these acts, who were his companions, say they were seized with great grief, seeing they were soon to be separated from their dear master: but he rejoiced to find himself so near the end of his race. The soldiers hastened him on, because the public shows were drawing to an end. The faithful of Rome came out to meet him, rejoicing at the sight of him, but grieving that they were so soon to lose him by a barbarous death. They earnestly wished that he might be released at the request of the people. The martyr knew in spirit their thoughts, and said much more to them than he had done in his letter on the subject of true charity, conjuring them not to obstruct his going to the Lord. Then kneeling with all the brethren, he prayed to the Son of God for the Church, for the ceasing of the persecution, and for perpetual charity and unanimity among the faithful. He arrived at Rome the 20th of December, the last day of the public entertainments, and was presented to the pre-

fect of the city, to whom the emperor's letter was delivered at the same time. He was then hurried by the soldiers into the amphitheatre. The saint hearing the lions roar, cried out, "I am the wheat of the Lord; I must be ground by the teeth of these beasts to be made the pure bread of Christ." Two fierce lions being let out upon him, they instantly devoured him, leaving nothing of his body but the larger bones: thus his prayer was heard. "After having been present at this sorrowful spectacle," say our authors, "which made us shed many tears, we spent the following night in our house in watching and prayer, begging of God to afford us some comfort by certifying us of his glory." They relate, that their prayer was heard, and that several of them in their slumber saw him in great bliss. They are exact in setting down the day of his death, that they might assemble yearly thereon to honour his martyrdom.[1]

They add, that his bones were taken up and carried to Antioch, and there laid in a chest as an inestimable treasure. St. Chrysostom says, his relics were carried in triumph on the shoulders of all the cities from Rome to Antioch. They were first laid in the cemetery without the Daphnitic gate, but in the reign of Theodosius the younger were translated thence with great pomp to a church in the city, which had been a temple of Fortune, but from this time bore his name, as Evagrius relates. (Evagr. Hist. Eccl. l. 1. c. 16. Ed. Vales.) St. Chrysostom exhorts all people to visit them, assuring them they would receive thereby many advantages, spiritual and corporal, which he proves at length. (Or. in S. Ignat. t. 2. p. 600

1 According to the common opinion, St. Ignatius was crowned with martyrdom in the year 107. The Greek copies of an homily of the sixth age, On the False Prophets, among the works of St. Chrysostom, say on the 20th; but Bede, in his Martyrology, on the 17th of December. Antoni Pagi, convinced by the letter of Dr. Loyde, bishop of St. Asaph's, places his martyrdom about the end of the year 116: for John Malalas of Antioch tells us the great earthquake, in which Dion Cassius mentions that Trajan narrowly escaped at Antioch, happened in that journey of Trajan in which he condemned St. Ignatius. Now Trajan marching to the Parthian war, arrived at Antioch on the 8th of January, in 113, the sixteenth year of his reign: and in his return from the East, above two years later, passed again through Antioch in 116, when this earthquake happened. St. Ignatius suffered at Rome toward the end of that year. Le Quien prefers this date, because it best agrees with the chronology of his successors to Theophilas. Oriens Christ. t. 2. p. 700.

Ed. Nov.) They are now at Rome, in the church of St. Clement pope, whither they were brought about the time when Antioch fell into the hands of the Saracens in the reign of Heraclius, in 637. (See Baron. Annal. ad an. 637, and Not. ad Martyr. Rom. ad 17 Dec.) The regular canons at Arouaise near Bapaume in Artois, the Benedictin monks at Liesse in Haynault, and some other churches, have obtained each some bone of this glorious martyr. (See Henschenius, Feb. t. 1. p. 35.) The Greeks keep his feast a holyday on the day of his death, the 20th of December. His martyrdom happened in 107.

The perfect spirit of humility, meekness, patience, charity, and all other Christian virtues, which the seven epistles of St. Ignatius breathe in every part, cannot fail deeply to affect all who attentively read them. Critics confess that they find in them a sublimity, an energy, and beauty of thought and expression, which they cannot sufficiently admire. But the Christian is far more astonished at the saint's perfect disengagement of heart from the world, the ardour of his love for God, and the earnestness of his desire of martyrdom. Every period in them is full of profound sense, which must be attentively meditated on before we can discover the divine sentiments of all virtues which are here expressed. Nor can we consider them without being inspired by some degree of the same, and being covered with confusion to find ourselves fall so far short of the humility and fervour of the primitive saints. Let us listen to the instructions which this true disciple of Christ gives in his letter to the Philadelphians, an abstract of his other six epistles being given above. He begins it by a strenuous recommendation of union with their bishop, priests, and deacons; and gives to their bishop (whom he does not name) great praises, especially for his humility and meekness, insomuch that he says his silence was more powerful than the vain discourses of others, and that conversing with an unchangeable serenity of mind, and in the sweetness of the living God, he was utterly a stranger to anger. He charges them to refrain from the pernicious weeds of heresy and schism, which

are not planted by the Father, nor kept by Christ. "Whoever belong to God and Jesus Christ, these are with the bishop. If any one follows him who maketh a schism, he obtains not the inheritance of the kingdom of God. He who walks in the simplicity of obedience, is not enslaved to his passion. Use one eucharist; for the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ is one, and the cup is one in the unity of his blood. There is one altar, as there is one bishop, with the college of the priesthood, and the deacons, my fellow-servants, that you may do all things according to God. My brethren, my heart is exceedingly dilated in the tender love which I bear you, and exulting beyond bounds, I render you secure and cautious: not I indeed, but Jesus Christ, in whom being bound, I fear the more for myself, being yet imperfect. But your prayer with God will make me perfect, that I may obtain the portion which his mercy assigns me." Having cautioned them against adopting Jewish ceremonies, and against divisions and schisms, he mentions one that had lately happened among them, and speaks of a revelation which he had received of it as follows: "When I was amongst you, I cried out with a loud voice, with the voice of God, saying, Hearken to your bishop, and the priesthood, and the deacons. Some suspected that I said this from a foresight of the division which some afterward made. But He for whom I am in chains is my witness, that I knew it not from man, but the Spirit declared it, saying, Do ye nothing without your bishop. Keep your body holy as the temple of God. Be lovers of unity; shun all divisions. Be ye imitators of Jesus Christ, as he is of the Father. I therefore did what lay in me, as one framed to maintain union. Where disagreement or anger is found, there God never dwells. But God forgives all penitents." He charges them to send some person of honour from

their church to congratulate with his church in Syria upon peace being restored to it, and calls him blessed who should be honoured with this commission.

Note.—In his letter to the Magnesians, after saluting them, he says, he rejoices exceedingly in their charity and faith, and adds, "Having the honour to bear a name of divine dignity, on account of the chains which I carry, I sing the glory of the churches, and wish them the union of the flesh and spirit of Jesus Christ our perpetual life, of faith, and of charity, than which nothing is more excellent; and what is chiefest, of Jesus and the Father, in whom, bearing with patience the whole power of the prince of this world, and escaping him, we shall possess God." The saint much commends their bishop Damas, and exhorts them to yield him perfect obedience, notwithstanding his youth. Setting death before their eyes as near at hand to every one, he puts them in mind that we must bear the mark of Jesus Christ, (which is charity,) not that of the world. "If we are not ready to die, in imitation of his sufferings, his life is not in us," says he.—"I recommend to you that you do all things in the concord of God, the bishop presiding for God, the priests in the place of the college of the apostles, and my dearest deacons, to whom is the ministry of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before all ages, and has appeared in the end. Therefore, following all the same conduct, respect one another, and let no one consider his neighbour according to the flesh, but ever love each other in Jesus Christ. As the Lord did nothing without the Father, so neither do you any thing without the priests. Meeting together, have one prayer, one mind, one hope in charity, in holy joy.—All of you meet as in one church of God, as to one altar, as to one Jesus Christ, who proceeds from one Father, exists in one, and returns to him in Unity." He cautions them against admitting the Jewish ceremonies, and against the errors of the Docetes. Then adds, "I shall enjoy you in all things if I am worthy. For though I am in chains, I am not to be compared to any one of you who enjoy your liberty. I know there is in you no pride; for you have Jesus Christ within you. And when I commend you, I know that you are more confounded, as it is written, *The just man is his own accuser*," Prov. xviii. 18. He again tenderly exhorts them to concord, and to obedience to their bishop, and commends himself, that he may attain to God and his church, of which he is not worthy to be called one, to their prayers, adding, "I stand much in need of your united prayer and charity in God, that the church in Syria may deserve to be watered by your church."

The epistle to the Trallians he begins thus: "I know that your sentiments are pure, your hearts inseparable in patience and meekness, which is not passing, but as it were natural; as I learn from your bishop Polybius who congratulated with me in my chains in Christ Jesus, in such manner that in him I beheld your whole multitude. Receiving through him your good will in God, I gloried, finding you to be, as I knew, imitators of God. As you are subject to the bishop as to Christ, you seem not to live according to men, but according to Jesus Christ." He bids them respect the deacons (whom he calls the ministers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ) as the precept of Christ, the priests as the senate of God, and the bishop as representing God. "Without these the very name of a church is not given," says he—"I know many things in God, but I measure myself, lest by glorying I perish. Now I have reason more to fear: nor must

I listen to those who speak kindly to me; for they who speak to commend me, scourge me. I desire indeed to suffer; but I know not whether I am worthy.—Though I am in chains, and understand heavenly things, the ranks of angels and principalities, things visible and invisible; am I on this account a disciple? for many things are wanting to us that we be not separated from God. I conjure you, not I, but the charity of Jesus Christ, to use Christian food, and to refrain from foreign weed, which is heresy. Heretics join Jesus Christ with what is defiled, giving a deadly poison in a mixture of wine and honey, which they who take, drink with pleasure their own death without knowing it. Refrain from such; which you will do if you remain united to God, Jesus Christ, and the bishop and the precepts of the apostles. He who is within the altar is clean, but he who is without it, that is, without the bishop, priests, and deacons, is not clean." He adds his usual exhortations to union, and begs their prayers for himself and his church, of which he is not worthy to be called one, being the last of them, and yet fighting in danger. "May my spirit sanctify you, not only now, but also when I shall enjoy God."

ST. PIONIUS, M.

He was priest of Smyrna, a true heir of the spirit of St. Polycarp, an apostolic man, who converted multitudes to the faith. He excelled in eloquence, and in the science of our holy religion. The paleness of his countenance bespoke the austerity of his life. In the persecution of Decius, in 250, on the 23rd of February, he was apprehended with Sabina and Asclepiades, while they were celebrating the anniversary festival of St. Polycarp's martyrdom. Pionius, after having fasted the eve with his companions, was forewarned thereof by a vision. On the morning after their solemn prayer, taking the holy bread (probably the eucharist) and water, they were surprised and seized by Polemon, the chief priest, and the guardian of the temple. In prolix interrogatories before him, they resisted all solicitations to sacrifice; professed they were ready to suffer the worst of torments and deaths rather than consent to his impious proposals, and declaring that they worshipped one only God, and that they were of the Catholic church. Asclepiades being asked what God he adored, made answer, "Jesus Christ." At which Pole-

mon said, "Is that another God?" Asclepiades replied, "No; he is the same they have just now confessed." A clear confession of the consubstantiality of God the Son, before the council of Nice. Being all threatened to be burnt alive, Sabina smiled. The pagans said, "Dost thou laugh? thou shalt then be led to the public stews." She answered, "God will be my protector on that occasion." They were cast into prison, and preferred a lower dungeon, that they might be more at liberty to pray, when alone. They were carried by force into the temple, and all manner of violence was used to compel them to sacrifice. Pionius tore the impious garlands which were put upon his head, and they resisted with all their might. Their constancy repaired the scandal given by Eudæmon, the bishop of Smyrna, there present, who had impiously apostatized and offered sacrifice. In the answers of St. Pionius to the judges, and in all the circumstances of his martyrdom, we admire the ardent piety and courage of one who had entirely devoted himself to God, and employed his whole life in his service. When Quintilian the proconsul arrived at Smyrna, he caused Pionius to be hung on the rack, and his body to be torn with iron hooks, and afterward condemned him to be burn ed alive. He was accordingly nailed to a trunk or post, and a pile heaped round him and set on fire. Metrodorus, a Marcionite priest, underwent the same punishment with him. His acts were written by eye-witnesses, quoted by Eusebius, l. 4. c. 15, and are extant genuine in Ruinart.

ST. BRIDGIT, OR BRIDGET, V.

AND BY CONTRACTION, BRIDE, ABBES, AND PATRONESS OF IRELAND.

She was born at Fochard, in Ulster, soon after Ireland had been blessed with the light of faith.

She received the religious veil in her youth, from the hands of St. Mel, nephew and disciple of St. Patrick. She built herself a cell under a large oak, thence called Kill-dara, or cell of the oak; living, as her name implies, the bright shining light of that country by her virtues. Being joined soon after by several of her own sex, they formed themselves into a religious community, which branched out into several other nunneries throughout Ireland; all which acknowledged her for their mother and foundress, as in effect she was of all in that kingdom. But a full account of her virtues has not been transmitted down to us, together with the veneration of her name. Her five modern lives mention little else but wonderful miracles. She flourished in the beginning of the sixth century, and is named in the martyrology of Bede, and in all others since that age. Several churches in England and Scotland are dedicated to God under her name, as among others, that of St. Bride in Fleet-street; several also in Germany, and some in France.

Her name occurs in most copies of the Martyrology which bears the name of St. Jerom, especially in those of Esternach and Corbie, which are most ancient. She is commemorated in the divine office in most churches of Germany, and in that of Paris, till the year 1607, and in many others in France. One of the Hebrides, or western islands which belong to Scotland, near that of Ila, was called, from a famous monastery built there in her honour, Brigidiani. A church of St. Brigit, in the province of Athol, was reputed famous for miracles, and a portion of her relics was kept with great veneration in a monastery of regular canons at Aburnethi, once capital of the kingdom of the Picts, and a bishopric, as Major mentions. (Major de Gestis Scotor. l. 2. c. 14.) Her body was found with those of SS. Patrick and Columba, in a triple vault in Down-Patrick, in 1185, as Giraldus Cambrensis informs us: (Topogr. Hibern. dist. 3. c. 18. Camden, &c.) they were all three translated to the cathedral of the same city; but their monument was destroyed in the reign of king Henry VIII. (Camden.) The head of St. Bride is now kept in the church of the Jesuits at Lisbon. (Bolland. p. 112 and p. 941. t. 1. Februarii.) See Bollandus, Feb. t. 1. p. 99.

ST. KINNIA, V.

Her memory was long sacred in Ireland, and her relics were in veneration at Lowth, in the

southern part of Ulster: but we have no other authentic account of her actions than that she was baptized by St. Patrick, and received the religious veil at his hand. See Jocelin's life of St. Patrick, Colgan, and Bollandus, ad 1 Feb. p. 96.

ST. SIGEBERT II. FRENCH KING OF AUSTRASIA, C.

Dagobert I. king of France, led for some time a very dissolute life, but was touched by an extraordinary grace upon the birth of his son Sigebert, and from that time entirely converted to God. Bagnetrude, our saint's mother, is only styled the concubine of Dagobert, though he was publicly married to her. The father desiring to have his son baptized by the most holy prelate of his dominions, recalled St. Amand, bishop of Maestricht, whom he had banished for his zeal in reproving his vices, fell at his feet at Clichi, near Paris, to ask his pardon, promised amendment, and by the advice of St. Owen and St. Eligius, then laymen in his court, engaged him to initiate his son in the sacrament of regeneration. The ceremony was performed with great pomp at Orleans, Charibert, king of part of Aquitain, and brother to Dagobert, being god-father. The young prince's education was intrusted by the father to the blessed Pepin, of Landen, mayor of his palace, who being forced by the envy of the nobility to withdraw for some time, carried Sigebert into the dominions of Charibert in Aquitain, where he enjoyed a considerable estate, the paternal patrimony of his wife, the blessed Itta. Pepin remained there about three years; after which term he was recalled to the court of Dagobert, who declared his son Sigebert, though only three years old, in 633, king of Austrasia, and gave him for his ministers, St. Cunibert, arch-

bishop of Cologne, and duke Adelgise, and committed the administration of the whole kingdom to Pepin, whom he always kept near his own person. Dagobert's second son, Clovis II., was born in the following year, 634, and to him the father allotted for his inheritance all the western part of France, containing all Neustria, and part of Burgundy.[1] Austrasia, or Eastern France, (in which sense Austria retains a like name in Germany,) at that time comprised Provence, and Switzerland, (dismembered from the ancient kingdom of Burgundy,) the Albigeois, Auvergne, Quercy, the Cevennes, Champagne, Lorraine, Upper Picardy, the archbishopric of Triers, and other states reaching to the borders of Friesland; Alsace, the Palatinate, Thuringia, Franconia, Bavaria, Suabia, and the country which lay betwixt the lower Rhine and Old Saxony. Dagobert died in 638, and was buried at the abbey of St. Denys, of which he was the munificent founder. According to the settlement which he had made, he was succeeded in Austrasia by St. Sigebert, and in the rest of France by his youngest son, Clovis II. Pepin of Landen, who had been mayor of the palace to the father, discharged the same office to his death, under St. Sigebert, and not content to approve himself a faithful minister and true father to the prince, he formed him from the cradle to all heroic Christian virtues. By his prudence, virtue, and valour, St. Sigebert in his youth was beloved and respected by his subjects, and feared by all his enemies. Pepin

1 Charibert, though he took the title of king, and resided at Toulouse, held his estates of his brother Dagobert, and by his gift. After Charibert's death, Chilperic, his eldest son, was put to death by Dagobert; but his second son, Boggis, left a numerous posterity, which was only extinguished in Lewis d'Armagnac, duke of Nemours, slain at the battle of Cerignole, where he commanded for Lewis XII. against Gonzales de Cordova, surnamed The Great Captain, for the Catholic king Ferdinand in 1503, by which the French lost the kingdom of Naples. So long did the family of Clovis II. subsist. See Vaissette, Hist. de Languedoc, Henault, Abr. de l'Hist. de France, t. 1. p. 26. and 818.

dying in 640, the virtuous king appointed his son Grimoald mayor of his palace. He reigned in perfect intelligence with his brother, of which we have few examples among the Merovingian kings whenever the French monarchy was divided. The Thuringians revolting, he reduced them to their duty; and this is the only war in which he was engaged. The love of peace disposed his heart to be a fit temple of the Holy Ghost, whom he invited into his soul by assiduous prayer, and the exercise of all Christian virtues. His patrimony he employed in relieving the necessitous, and in building or endowing monasteries, churches, and hospitals. He founded twelve monasteries, the four principal of which were Cougnon, now a priory, not far from Bouillon; Stavelo and Malmedi, two miles from each other, and St. Martin's near Metz. St. Remaclus brought from Solignac the rule of St. Columban, which king Sigebert in his charter to Cougnon, calls the rule of the ancient fathers. This that holy abbot established first at Cougnon, and afterward at Malmedi and Stavelo. A life filled with good works, and devoted all to God, can never be called short. God was pleased to call this good king from the miseries of this world to the recompense of his labours on the first of February, in the year 656, the eighteenth of his reign, and the twenty-fifth of his age.

He was interred in the abbey of St. Martin's near Metz, which he had built. His body was found incorrupt n 1063, and placed in a monument on the side of the high altar: and in 1170 it was enshrined in a silver case. The monastery of St. Martin's, and all others in the suburbs, were demolished by Francis of Lorraine, duke of Guise, in 1552, when Charles V. laid seige to Metz. The relics of St. Sigebert are now deposited in the collegiate church of our Lady at Nancy. He is honoured among the saints in great part of the dominions which he governed, and in the monasteries and churches which he founded. See Fredegarius and his continuator, Sigebert of Gemblours, in his life of this saint, with the learned remarks of Henschenius.

Note.—St. Sigebert left his son Dagobert, about seven years old, under the care of Grimoald, mayor of his palace, who treacherously

sent him into Ireland, and placed his own son Childebert on the throne. This usurper reigned seven months, as Schoëpflin proves from the express testimony of Chronicon Brevissimum, and from circumstances mentioned by Fredegarius, against the mistake of the authors, l'Art de vérifier les Dates, p. 481, who say he only reigned seven days. By an insurrection of the people, Grimoald and his son were deposed, and both perished in prison: but Dagobert not being found, Clovis II. united Austrasia to his other dominions. Dagobert II., by the assistance of St. Wilfrid, afterward archbishop of York, returned into France eighteen years after the death of his father, and recovered Alsace and some other provinces by the cession either of Childeric II., son of Clovis II., (then monarch of all France,) or of his brother Theodoric III., who succeeded him before the month of April, in 674: for the reign of Dagobert II. must be dated from the latter end of 673, with Henault, or from 674, with Schoëpflin. The spirit of religion and piety, which he had learned in the school of afflictions, and under the great masters of a spiritual life, who then flourished among the Scots and Irish, was eminently the distinguishing part of his character. As he resided chiefly in Alsace, he filled that country, in the first place, with monuments of his devotion, being so liberal in founding and endowing monasteries and churches, that though his reign was only of six years, Schoëpflin assures us that the French church is not more indebted to any reign than to this, at least in those parts. (p. 740.) St. Wilfrid, bishop of York, had exceedingly promoted his return into France; and when that prelate was compelled to leave England, Dagobert entertained him with the most cordial affection, and, upon the death of St. Arbogastus, earnestly pressed him to accept of that see. St. Wilfrid declined that dignity, promising, however, to call upon this good king in his return from Rome, where he obtained a sentence of pope Agatho in his favour. But coming into France, he found his royal friend cut off by a violent death. It is the general persuasion of the French historians, that the impious Ebroin, mayor of the palace to Theodoric III, king of Burgundy and Neustria, was the author of his death, with a view to seize his dominions. Dagobert was murdered by assassins at Stenay upon the Meuse, now the best town in the duchy of Bar in Lorraine. The people, however, chose Pepin and Martin dukes or governors of Austrasia, who defended their liberty against Ebroin. Martin was afterward assassinated by the contrivance of Ebroin, and Ebroin by Ermenfrid: but Pepin, in 687, defeated Theodoric III. at Testry, took Paris, and the king himself; from which time, under the title of mayor, he enjoyed the supreme power in the French monarchy. The death of St. Dagobert happened in 679, on the 23d of December, on which day he is commemorated in the Martyrology of Ado and others, and honoured as a martyr at Stenay, in the diocess of Verdun, ever since the eighth century. The church of Strasburg was much enriched by this prince, as may be seen in Schoëpflin's Alsatia Illustrata. The same author gives an account of some of the monasteries which were founded by this prince in those parts, (c. 11. § 254. p. 736,) and shows from his charters that the palace where he chiefly resided was at Isenburg in Alsace. (Sect. 1. c. 10. § 146. p. 693.) The year of the death of Dagobert II. is learned from the life of St. Wilfrid, who returned from Rome when St. Agatho sat in St. Peter's chair. See on this holy king the lives of St. Wilfrid and St. Salaberga; also his charters; and, among the moderns, Dan. Schoëpflin, professor of history and eloquence at Strasburg, in his Alsatia Illustrata, anno 1751. Sect. 2. c. 1. § 3. p. 740. 743 and § 1 c. 10. § 146. p. 693. c. 11. § 254. p. 736. Also Calmet, Hist. de Lorraine, t. 1. l. 10. n. 16. p. 432. The

first edition of this work was given in 1728, in three volumes folio, but the second edition is so much enlarged as to fill six volumes folio. The reign of Dagobert II. escaped most of the French historians, which omission, and a false epoch of the beginning of the reign of Dagobert I. brought incredible confusion into the chronology and history of most of the Merovingian kings, which Adrian Valois, Henschenius, Le Cointe, Pagi, Longuerue, and others, have taken great pains to clear up.

FEBRUARY II.

THE PURIFICATION,

COMMONLY CALLED CANDLEMAS-DAY.

The law of God, given by Moses to the Jews, to insinuate both to us and them, that by the sin of Adam man is conceived and born in sin, and obnoxious to his wrath, ordained that a woman, after child-birth, should continue for a certain time in a state which that law calls unclean; during which she was not to appear in public, nor presume to touch any thing consecrated to God.[1] This term was of forty days upon the birth of a son, and the time was double for a daughter: on the expiration of which, the mother was to bring to the door of the tabernacle, or temple, a lamb of a year old, and a young pigeon or turtle dove. The lamb was for a holocaust, or burnt offering, in acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God, and in thanksgiving for her own happy delivery; the pigeon or turtle dove was for a sin-offering. These being sacrificed to Almighty God by the priest, the woman was cleansed of the legal impurity, and reinstated in her former privileges.

A young pigeon, or turtle dove, by way of a sin-offering, was required of all, whether rich or

1 Lev. xii. 2.

poor: but whereas the charge of a lamb might be too burdensome on persons of narrow circumstances, in that case nothing more was required than two pigeons or two turtle doves, one for a burnt, the other for a sin offering.[1]

Our Saviour having been conceived by the Holy Ghost, and his blessed Mother remaining always a spotless virgin, it is most evident from the terms of the law,[2] that she was, in reality, under no obligation to it, nor within the intent of it. She was, however, within the letter of the law, in the eye of the world, who were as yet strangers to her miraculous conception. And her humility making her perfectly resigned, and even desirous to conceal her privilege and dignity, she submitted with great punctuality and exactness to every humbling circumstance which the law required. Pride indeed proclaims its own advantages, and seeks honours not its due; but the humble find their delight in obscurity and abasement, they shun all distinction and esteem, which they clearly see their own nothingness and baseness to be most unworthy of: they give all glory to God alone, to whom it is due. Devotion also and zeal to honour God by every observance prescribed by his law, prompted Mary to perform this act of religion, though evidently exempt from the precept. Being poor herself, she made the offering appointed for the poor: accordingly is this part of the law mentioned by St. Luke,[3] as best agreeing with the meanness of her worldly condition. But her offering, however mean in itself, was made with a perfect heart, which is what God chiefly regards in all that is offered to him. The King of Glory would appear every where in the robes of poverty, to point out to us the advantages of a suffering and lowly state, and to repress our pride, by which, though really poor

1 Lev. xii. 8. 2 Ibid. 2. 3 Luke ii. 24.

and mean in the eyes of God, we covet to appear rich, and, though sinners, would be deemed innocents and saints.

A second great mystery is honoured this day, regarding more immediately the person of our Redeemer, *viz.* his presentation in the temple. Besides the law which obliged the mother to purify herself, there was another which ordered, that the first-born son should be offered to God:[1] and in these two laws were included several others, as that the child, after its presentation, should be ransomed[2] with a certain sum of money,[3] and peculiar sacrifices offered on the occasion.

Mary complies exactly with all these ordinances. She obeys not only in the essential points of the law, as in presenting herself to be purified, and in her offering her first-born, but has strict regard to all the circumstances. She remains forty days at home, she denies herself all this time the liberty of entering the temple, she partakes not of things sacred, though the living temple of the God of Israel; and on the day of her purification, she walks several miles to Jerusalem, with the world's Redeemer in her arms. She waits for the priest at the gate of the temple, makes her offerings of thanksgiving and expiation, presents her divine Son by the hands of the priest to his eternal Father, with the most profound humility, adoration, and thanksgiving. She then redeems him with five shekels, as the law appoints, and receives him back again as a despositum in her special care, till the Father shall again demand him for the full accomplishment of man's redemption. It is clear that Christ

1 Ibid. 23. 2 Exod. xiii. 13.

3 This, from Levit. xxvii. 6. and Numb. iii. 47, appears to have been five shekels, each shekel weighing, according to Prideaux, (Preface to Connexion of the Old and New Testament, p. xvii.) about three shillings of our money: so that the five amounted to about fifteen shillings sterling.

was not comprehended in the law; "The king's son, to whom the inheritance of the crown belongs, is exempt from servitude:—much more Christ, who was the Redeemer both of our souls and bodies, was not subject to any law by which he was to be himself redeemed," as St. Hilary observes.[1] But he would set an example of humility, obedience, and devotion: and would renew, in a solemn and public manner, and in the temple, the oblation of himself to his Father for the accomplishment of his will, and the redemption of man, which he had made privately in the first moment of his Incarnation. With what sentiments did the divine Infant offer himself to his Father at the same time! the greatest homage of his honour and glory the Father could receive, and a sacrifice of satisfaction adequate to the injuries done to the Godhead by our sins, and sufficient to ransom our souls from everlasting death! With what cheerfulness and charity did he offer himself to all his torments! to be whipped, crowned with thorns, and ignominiously put to death for us!

Let every Christian learn hence to offer himself to God with this divine victim, through which he may be accepted by the Father; let him devote himself with all his senses and faculties to his service. If sloth, or any other vice, has made us neglectful of this essential duty, we must bewail past omissions, and make a solemn and serious consecration of ourselves this day to the divine majesty with the greater fervour, crying out with St. Austin, in compunction of heart, "Too late have I known thee, too late have I begun to love thee, O beauty more ancient than the world! But our sacrifice, if we desire it may be accepted, must not be lame and imperfect. It would be an insult to offer to God, in union with his Christ, a

1 St. Hilar. in Matt. c. 17. n. 11. p. 696, 697

divided heart, or a heart infected with wilful sin. It must therefore first be cleansed by tears of sincere compunction: its affections must be crucified to the world by perfect mortification. Our offering must be sincere and fervent, without reserve, allowing no quarter to any of our vicious passions and inclinations, and no division in any of our affections. It must also be universal; to suffer and to do all for the divine honour. If we give our hearts to Christ in this manner, we shall receive him with his graces and benedictions. He would be presented in the temple by the hands of his mother: let us accordingly make the offering of our souls through Mary, and beg his graces through the same channel.

The ceremony of this day was closed by a third mystery, the meeting in the temple of the holy persons, Simeon and Anne, with Jesus and his parents, from which this festival was anciently called by the Greeks Hypante, the meeting.[1] Holy Simeon on that occasion, received into his arms the object of all his desires and sighs, and praised God in raptures of devotion for being blessed with the happiness of beholding the so much longed-for Messias. He foretold to Mary her martyrdom of sorrow; and that Jesus brought redemption to those who would accept of it on the terms it was offered them; but a heavy judgment on all infidels who should obstinately reject it, and on Christians also whose lives were a contradiction to his holy maxims and example. Mary hearing this terrible prediction, did not answer one word, felt no agitation of mind from the present, no dread for the future; but courageously and sweetly committed all to God's holy will. Anne also, the prophetess, who, in her widowhood served God with great fervour, had the happiness to acknowledge and adore in this great

1 Ὑπάντη from ὑπαντάω occurro.

mystery the world's Redeemer. Amidst the crowd of priests and people, the Saviour of the world is known only by Simeon and Anne. Even when he disputed with the doctors, and when he wrought the most stupendous miracles, the learned, the wise, and the princes did not know him. Yet here, whilst a weak, speechless child, carried in the arms of his poor mother, he is acknowledged and adored by Simeon and Anne. He could not hide himself from those who sought him with fervour, humility, simplicity, and ardent love. Unless we seek him in these dispositons he will not manifest himself, nor communicate his graces to us. Simeon, having beheld his Saviour in the flesh, desired no longer to see the light of this world, nor any creatures on earth. If we truly love God, our distance from him must be a continual pain: and we must sigh after that desired moment which will free us from the danger of ever losing him by sin, and will put us in possession of Him who is the joy of the blessed, and the infinite treasure of heaven. Let us never cease to pray that he purify our hearts from all earthly dross, and draw them to himself: that he heal, satiate, and inflame our souls, as he only came upon earth to kindle in all hearts the fire of his love.

On blessing the candles and the procession.

The procession with lighted tapers on this day is mentioned by pope Gelasius I., also by St. Ildefonsus, St. Eligius,[1] St. Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem, St. Cyril of Alexandria, &c. in their sermons on this festival. Saint Bernard says,[2] This holy procession was first made by the virgin mother, St. Joseph, holy Simeon, and Anne, to be afterward performed in all places and by

1 Serm. 2. 2 Serm. de Purif. p. 959.

every nation, with the exultation of the whole earth, to honour this mystery." In his second sermon on this feast he describes it thus:[1] "They walk two and two, holding in their hands candles lighted, not from common fire, but from that which had been first blessed in the church by the priests,[2] and singing in the ways of the Lord, because great is his glory." He shows that the concurrence of many in the procession and prayer is a symbol of our union and charity, and renders our praises the more honourable and acceptable to God. We *walk* while we sing to God, to denote that to stand still in the paths of virtue is to go back. The lights we bear in our hands represent the divine fire of love with which our hearts ought to be inflamed, and which we ought to offer to God without any mixture of strange fire, the fire of concupiscence, envy, ambition, or the love of creatures. We also hold these lights in our hands to honour Christ, and to acknowledge him as the *true light*,[3] whom they represent under this character, and who is called by holy Simeon in this mystery, *a light for the enlightening of the Gentiles*,[4] for he came to dispel our spiritual darkness. The candles likewise express that by faith his light shines in our souls: as also that we are to *prepare his way* by good works, by which we are to be *a light to* men.[5]

Lights are used by the church during the celebration of the divine mysteries, while the gospel is read, and the sacraments administered, on a motive of honour and respect. On the same account lamps burned before the Lord in the tabernacle[6] and temple. Great personages were anciently received and welcomed with lights, as was king Antiochus by Jason and others on his enter-

1 Serm. 2. p. 961.
2 According to the ceremonies then in use.
3 John i. 9.
4 Luke ii. 3.
5 Matt. v. 6.
6 Exod. xxviii. 20.

ing Jerusalem.[1] Lights are likewise expressive of joy, and were anciently used on this account in receiving Roman emperors, and on other public occasons, as at present. "Throughout all the churches of the East," says St. Jerom, "when the gospel is to be read, though the sun shines, torches are used, not to chase away darkness, but for a sign of joy."[2] The apostolic canons mention incense, and oil for the lamps, then used in the churches.[3] Many out of devotion burned lamps before the bodies of saints, as we read in Prudentius,[4] St. Paulinus,[5] &c. The corporeal creatures which we use, are the gifts of God: it is therefore just that we should honour and glorify him by them. Besides, in our embodied state, they contribute to excite our souls to devotion; they are to our eyes, what words are to our ears, and by our organs move the affections of our hearts.[6] Though piety consists in the fervour of the soul, and is interior and spiritual, yet many sensible things concur to its aid and improvement; and we may as well condemn the use of words, which are corporeal, and affect the soul by the sense of hearing, as the use of suitable approved ceremonies. Christ made use of sensible signs in the institution of his most divine sacraments, and in several miraculous cures, &c. The church always used external rites and ceremonies in the divine worship. These contribute to the majesty and dignity of religion, which in our present condition would appear naked, if destitute of all exterior. The candles are blessed previously to the use of them, because the church blesses and sanctifies, by prayer, whatever is employed in the divine service. We are to hold the candles in our hands on this day, while the gospel is read or sung; also from the elevation

1 2 Macch. iv. 22. 2 Adv. Vigil. p. 304.
3 Can 3. 4 Hymn 2.
5 Nat. iii. v. 98.
6 See the pastoral charge of the late Dr Butler, bishop of Durham

to the communion, in the most fervent spirit of sacrifice, offering ourselves to God with our divine Redeemer, and desiring to meet in spirit this blessed company in this mystery; likewise to honour the mother of God in her purification, and still more so, with the most profound adoration and gratitude, our divine Saviour in his presentation in our flesh for us. The same lively sentiments of devotion ought to inflame our breasts on this occasion, as if we had been present with holy Simeon and the rest in the temple, whilst we carry in our hands these emblems of our spiritual joy and homage, and of the consecration of ourselves in union with our heavenly victim, through the intercession of his virgin mother.

On the Christian rite of churching women after child-birth.

God, in the old law, declared several actions unclean, which, though innocent and faultless in themselves, had a constant, but remote regard to sin. One of these was child-birth, to denote the impurity of man's origin by his being conceived and born in sin. For the removal of legal uncleanness in general, God established certain expiatory rites, consisting of ablutions and sacrifices, to which all were strictly obliged who desired to be purified; that is, restored to the privileges of their brethren, and declared duly qualified members of the synagogue or Jewish church. It would be superstitious since the death of Christ, and the publication of the new law, to stand in awe of legal uncleannesses, or to have recourse to Jewish purifications on account of any of them, whether after child-birth or in any other cases. It is not, therefore, with that intention that Christian mothers come to the church, as Jewish women did to the tabernacle, in order to be purified from any uncleanness they contract by child-birth. It is not on any consideration peculiar to the Jews

that this ceremony was established in the Christian church, but on a motive common to all mankind, the performing the duty of thanksgiving and prayer. Hence in the canon law, pope Innocent III. speaks of it as follows: "If women after childbearing desire immediately to enter the church, they commit no sin by so doing, nor are they to be hindered. Nevertheless, if they choose to refrain out of respect for some time, we do not think their devotion ought to be reprehended."[1]

In some dioceses this term is limited to a certain number of days. Where this is not regulated by custom, or by any particular statute, the party may perform this duty as soon as she is able to go abroad. Her first visit is to be to the church: first to give God thanks for her safe delivery: secondly, to implore his blessing on herself and her child. It ought to be her first visit, to show her readiness to acquit herself of this duty to God, and to give him the first-fruits of her recovery and blessing received; as the first-fruits in every thing are most particularly due to God, and most agreeable to him, and which, in the old law, he was most jealous in exacting of his people. The acknowledgment of a benefit received is the least return we can make for it: the law of nature dictates the obligation of this tribute; God strictly requires it, and this is the means to draw down new blessings on us, the flowing of which is by nothing more effectually obstructed than by insensibility and ingratitude: wherefore, next to the praise and love of God, thanksgiving is the principal homage we owe him in the sacrifice of our hearts, and is a primary act of prayer. The book of psalms abounds with acts of thanksgiving; the apostle every where recommends and inculcates it in the strongest terms. The primitive Christians had these words, *Thanks be to God*,

[1] Cap. unico de Purif. post partum.

always in their mouths, and used them as their ordinary form of salutation on all occasions, as Saint Austin mentions,[1] who adds, "What better thing can we bear in our hearts, or pronounce with our tongues, or express with our pens, than, *Thanks be to God?*" It is the remark of St. Gregory of Nyssa,[2] that besides past benefits, and promises of other inestimable benefits to come, we every instant of our lives receive from God fresh favours; and therefore we ought, if it were possible, every moment to make him a return of thanks with our whole hearts, and never cease from this duty. We owe a particular thanksgiving for his more remarkable blessings. A mother regards her safe delivery, and her happiness in being blessed with a child, as signal benefits, and therefore she owes a particular holocaust of thanks for them. This she comes to offer at the foot of the altar. She comes also to ask the succours of divine grace. She stands in need of an extraordinary aid from above, both for herself and her child. For herself, that, by her example, instructions, and watchfulness, she may fulfil her great obligations as a mother. For her child, that it may reap the advantage of a virtuous education, may live to God, and become one day a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem: otherwise, what will it avail her to have been a mother, or the child to have been born? Now prayer is the channel which God has appointed for the conveyance of his graces to us. The mother, therefore, must be assiduous in begging daily of the Father of mercies all necessary succours for these purposes: but this she should make the subject of her most zealous petitions on the occasion of her first solemn appearance after child-bed before his altar. She should, at the same time, make the most perfect offering and consecration of her child to the divine Majesty. Every mother, in

1 Ep. 41. olim 77. 2 Or. 1. de precat. t. 1. p. 715.

imitation of the Blessed Virgin, ought to perform this triple duty of thanksgiving, petition, and oblation, and through her hands, who, on the day of her purification, set so perfect a pattern of this devotion.

ST. LAURENCE, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

He was one of those who accompanied St. Austin into this island, about the year 597, and was his immediate successor in the see of Canterbury, in 608, in which he sat eleven years. When Eadbald, son and successor to the holy king Ethelbert, not only refused to follow his father's example in embracing the faith, but gave into idolatry, and incestuously took to his bed his father's widow, Laurence having laboured hard for his conversion to no purpose, and despairing of reclaiming him, thought of nothing but retiring into France, as some others had already done. But he was severely scourged by St. Peter, in a dream, on the eve of his intended departure, with reproaches for designing to forsake that flock for which Christ had laid down his life. This did not only prevent his going, but had such an effect upon the king, when he was shown the marks of the stripes he had received on this occasion, that he became a thorough convert, doing whatever was required of him, both for his own sanctification and the propagation of Christianity in his dominions. St. Laurence did not long survive this happy change, dying in the year 619. He is mentioned in the Roman Martyrology. See Bede, Hist. b. 2. c. 4. 6, 7.[1] Malmesb. l. 1. Pontif. Angl.

1 From these words of Bede, b. 1. c. 27. Austin sent to Rome Laurence the priest, and Peter the monk, some modern historians infer that St. Laurence was no monk, but a secular priest; though this proof is weak. See Collier, Dict. Suppl. Henschenius, p. 290. and Le Quien, Oriens Christ. t. 1. p. 421.

FEBRUARY III.

SAINT BLASE, BISHOP AND MARTYR.

The four modern different Greek acts of this Saint are of small authority. Bollandus has supplied this deficiency by learned remarks.

A. D. 316

He was bishop of Sebaste in Armenia, and was crowned with martyrdom in the persecution of Licinius, in 316, by the command of Agricolaus, governor of Cappadocia and the lesser Armenia. It is mentioned in the acts of St. Eustratius, who received the crown of martyrdom in the reign of Dioclesian, and is honoured on the 13th of December, that Saint Blase, the bishop of Sebaste, honourably received his relics, deposited them with those of St. Orestes, and punctually executed every article of the last will and testament of Saint Eustratius. His festival is kept a holiday in the Greek church on the 11th of February. He is mentioned in the ancient Western Martyrologies which bear the name of St. Jerom. Ado and Usuard, with several more ancient manuscript Martyrologies, quoted by Chatelain, place his name on the 15th. In the holy wars his relics were dispersed over the West, and his veneration was propagated by many miraculous cures, especially of sore throats. He is the principal patron of the commonwealth of Ragusa.[1] No other reason than the great devotion of the people to this celebrated martyr of the church seems to have given occasion to the wool-combers to choose him the titular patron of their profession: on which account his festival is still kept by them with a solemn guild at Norwich. Perhaps also his country might in part determine them to this choice: for it seems that the first branch, or at least hint

1 See Bollandus, Pagi ad an. 316. Chatelain, Notes on the Martyr. p. 507. and Jos. Assemani in Cal. Univ. ad 11 Feb. t. 6. p. 123.

of this manufacture, was borrowed from the remotest known countries of the East, as was that of silk: or the iron combs, with which he is said to have been tormented, gave occasion to this choice.

The iron combs, hooks, racks, swords, and scaffolds, which were purpled with the blood of the martyrs, are eternal proofs of their invincible courage and constancy in the divine service. But are they not at the same time subjects of our condemnation and confusion? How weak are our resolutions! How base our pusillanimity and cowardice in the pursuit of virtue! We have daily renewed our most sacred baptismal engagements, and our purposes of faithfully serving God: these we have often repeated at the feet of God's ministers, and in presence of his holy altars; and we have often begun our conversion with great fervour. Yet these fair blossoms were always nipped in the bud: for want of constancy we soon fell back into our former sloth and disorders, adding to our other prevarications that of base infidelity. Instead of encountering gibbets and wild beasts, we were scared at the sight of the least difficulty; or we had not courage to make the least sacrifice of our passions, or to repulse the weakest and most contemptible assaults of the world. Its example, or that dangerous company from which we had not resolution to separate ourselves, carried us away: and we had not courage to withstand those very maxims which we ourselves condemn in the moments of our serious reflections, as contrary to the spirit of the gospel. Perhaps we often flew back for fear of shadows, and out of apprehensions frequently imaginary, lest we should forfeit some temporal advantage, some useful or agreeable friend. Perhaps we were overcome by the difficulties which arose barely from ourselves, and wanted resolution to deny our senses, to subdue our passions, to renounce dangerous occasions, or to enter upon a

penitential life. Blinded by self-love, have we not sheltered our dastardly pusillanimity under the cloak of pretended necessity, or even virtue?

ST. ANSCHARIUS, C.

ARCHBISHOP OF HAMBURG AND BREMEN.

From his excellent life compiled by St. Rembert his successor, with the remarks of Mabillon, Act. Bened. t. 4.

A. D. 865.

He was a monk, first of Old Corbie in France, afterward of Little Corbie in Saxony. Harold, or Heriold, prince of Denmark, having been baptized in the court of the emperor Lewis Debonnair, Anscarius preached the faith with great success, first to the Danes, afterward to the Swedes, and lastly in the north of Germany. In 832, he was made archbishop of Hamburg, and legate of the holy see, by pope Gregory IV. That city was burnt by an army of Normans, in 845. The saint continued to support his desolote churches, till, in 849, the see of Bremen becoming vacant, pope Nicholas united it to that of Hamburg, and appointed him bishop of both. Denmark and Sweden had relapsed into idolatry, notwithstanding the labours of many apostolical missionaries from New Corbie, left there by our saint. His presence soon made the faith flourish again in Denmark, under the protection of king Horick. But in Sweden the superstitious king Olas cast lots whether he should be admitted or no. The saint grieved to see the cause of God and religion committed to the cast of a die, recommended the issue to the care of heaven. The lot proved favourable, and the bishop converted many of the lower rank, and established many churches there which he left under zealous pastors at his return to Bremen. He wore a rough hair shirt, and whilst his health permitted him, contented himself with a small quantity of bread and water

He never undertook any thing without recommending it first to God by earnest prayer, and had an extraordinary talent for preaching. His charity to the poor had no bounds; he washed their feet, and waited on them at table. He ascribed it to his sins, that he never met with the glory of martyrdom in all that he had suffered for the faith. To excite himself to compunction and to the divine praise, he made a collection of pathetic sentences, some of which he placed at the end of each psalm; several of which are found in certain manuscript psalters, as Fleury takes notice. The learned Fabricius, in his Latin Library of the middle age, calls them an illustrious monument of the piety of this holy prelate. St. Anscharius died at Bremen in the year 865, the sixty-seventh of his age, and thirty-fourth of his episcopal dignity; and was honoured with miracles.

His name occurs in the Martyrologies soon after his death. In the German language he is called St. Scharies, and his collegiate church of Breman Sant-Scharies. That at Hamburg, which bore his name, has been converted by the Lutherans into an hospital for orphans. His name was rather Ansgar, as it is written in his own letter, and in a charter of Lewis Debonnaire. In this letter (Ap. Bolland. et Mabill.) he attributes all the fruits and glory of the conversion of the Northern nations, to which he preached, to the zeal of that emperor and of Ebbo, archbishop of Rheims, without taking the least notice of himself or his own labours. The life of St. Willehad, first bishop of Bremen, who died in 789 or 791, compiled by St. Anscharius, is a judicious and elegant work, and the preface a masterpiece for that age. It is abridged and altered by Surius, but published entire at Cologne, in 1642; and more correctly by Mabillon; and again by Fabricius, among the historians of Hamburg, t. 2.

ST. WEREBURGE, V. ABBESS.[1]

PATRONESS OF CHESTER.

Seventh Age.

St. Wereburge was daughter of Wulfere, king of Mercia, by St. Ermenilde, daughter of Ercom-

1 From Harpsfield, Bede, Brompton, Florence of Worcester, Higden, Langhorn's Chronicle, Leland's Collections, Powel's History of Wales, the Saxon Chronicle, Simeon of Durham, and her curious life, written in old English metre, from the Passionary of the monastery

bert, king of Kent, and St. Sexburge. In her was centred the royal blood of all the chief Saxon kings; but her glory was the contempt of a vain world, even from her cradle, on the pure motive of the love of God. She had three brothers, Wulfade and Rufin, who died martyrs, and Kenred, who ended his life at Rome in the odour of sanctity. Her father, Wulfere, resided near Stone, in Staffordshire. His eldest brother, Peada, had begun to plant the faith in Mercia. Wulfere promised at his marriage, to extirpate the remains of idolatry, and was then a Christian; but worldly motives made him delay the performance of his promise. Ermenilde endeavoured to soften the fierceness of his temper; but she found it a far more easy task to dispose the minds of her tender nursery to be faithful to divine grace; and, under her care, all her children grew up fruitful plants in the garden of the saints. Wereburge excelled the rest in fervour and discretion. She was humble, obedient, and meek; never failed of assisting with her mother at the daily performance of the whole church office; besides spending many hours on her knees in private devotion in her closet. She eagerly listened to every instruction and exhortation of piety. At an age in which youth is the fondest of recreations, pleasures, and vanities, she was always grave, reserved and mortified. She was a stranger to any joy but that which the purity of her conscience afforded her; and in holy compunction bewailed before God, without ceasing, her distance from him, and her other spiritual miseries. She

of Chester, by Henry Bradshaw, a monk of that house, who died in 1521, on whom see Wood, Athen. Oxon. vol. 1. p. 9. n. 14. and Tanner, Bibl. p. 121. This scarce history was printed in 1521, by Richard Pynson, printer to king Henry VIII. See her ancient life, a MS. copy of which Camden sent to F. Rosweide, published by Henschenius. with notes, p. 386. See also the summary of the life of St. Wereburge, with an historical account of the images carved on her shrine, (now the episcopal throne,) in the choir of the cathedral of Chester, by William Cooper, M. D. at Chester, 1749.

trembled at the thought of the least danger that could threaten her purity; fasting and prayer were her delight, by which she endeavoured to render her soul acceptable to her heavenly bridegroom. Her beauty and her extraordinary qualifications, rendered more conspicuous by the greater lustre of her virtue, drew to her many suitors for marriage. But a mountain might sooner be moved than her resolution shaken. The prince of the West-Saxons waited on her with rich presents; but she refused to accept them or listen to his proposals, saying, she had chosen the Lord Jesus, the Redeemer of mankind, for the Spouse of her soul, and had devoted herself to his service in the state of virginity. But her greatest victory was over the insidious attempts of Werbode, a powerful wicked knight of her father's court. The king was greatly indebted to the valour and services of this knight for his temporal prosperity, and entertained a particular affection for him. The knight, sensible of this, and being passionately fond of Wereburge, made use of all his interest with the king to obtain his consent to marry her, which was granted, on condition he could gain that of the royal virgin. Queen Ermenilde and her two sons, Wulfade and Rufin, were grievously afflicted at the news. These two princes were then upon their conversion to Christianity, and for this purpose resorted to the cell of St. Chad, bishop of Litchfield, under pretence of going a hunting; for the saint resided in an hermitage, situate in a forest. By him they were instructed in the faith, and baptized. Werbode, finding them an obstacle to his design, contrived their murder, for which he is said to have moved the father to give an order in a fit of passion, by showing him the young princes returning from the bishop, and incensing him against them by slanders: for the king was passionate, and had

been likewise prevailed on by his perfidious minister to countenance and favour idolatry. Werbode died miserably soon after, and Wulfere no sooner heard that the murder was perpetrated, but, stung with grief and remorse, he entered into himself, did great penance, and entirely gave himself up to the advice of his queen and St. Chad. He destroyed all the idols, converted their temples into churches, founded the abbey of Peterborough, and the priory of Stone, where the two martyrs were buried, and exceedingly propagated the worship of the true God, by his zealous endeavours and example.

Wereburge, seeing this perfect change in the disposition of her father, was no longer afraid to disclose to him her earnest desire of consecrating herself to God in a religious state of life. Finding him averse, and much grieved at the proposal, she pleaded her cause with so many tears, and urged the necessity of preparing for death in so pathetic a manner, that her request was granted. Her father even thanked God with great humility for so great a grace conferred on her, though not without many tears which such a sacrifice cost him. He conducted her in great state to Ely, attended by his whole court, and was met at the gate of the monastery by the royal abbess St. Audry, with her whole religious family in procession, singing holy hymns to God. Wereburge, falling on her knees, begged to be admitted in quality of a penitent. She obtained her request, and Te Deum was sung. She went through the usual trials with great humility and patience, and with joy exchanged her rich coronet, purple silks, and gold, for a poor veil and a coarse habit, and resigned herself into the hands of her superior, to live only to Christ. King Wulfere, his three brothers, and Egbright, or Egbert, king of Kent, and Adulph, king of the East-Angles, together with the great lords of their respective

states, were present at these her solemn espousals with Christ,[1] and were entertained by Wulfere with a royal magnificence. The virgin here devoted herself to God with new fervour in all her actions, and made the exercises of obedience, prayer, contemplation, humility, and penance, her whole occupation, instead of that circle of vanities and amusements which employ the slaves of the world. King Wulfere dying in 675, was buried at Lichfield. Kenred, his son, being then too young to govern, his brother Ethelred succeeded him. St. Ermenilde was no sooner at liberty, but she took the religious veil at Ely, under her mother, St. Sexburge, at whose death she was chosen third abbess, and was honoured in England among the saints on the 13th of February. Her daughter, St. Wereburge, at her uncle king Ethelred's persuasion, left Ely to charge herself, at his request, with the superintendency of all the houses of religious women in his kingdom, that she might establish in them the observance of the most exact monastic discipline. By his liberality she founded those of Trentham in Staffordshire, of Hanbury, near Tutbury, in the county of Stafford, (not in the county of Huntingdon, as some mistake,) and of Wedon, one of the royal palaces in Northamptonshire. This king also founded the collegiate church of St. John Baptist, in the suburbs of West-Chester, and gave to St. Egwin the ground for the great abbey of Evesham; and after having reigned twenty-nine years, embraced the monastic state in his beloved monastery of Bardney, upon the river Witham, not far from Lincoln, of which he was afterward chosen abbot. He resigned his crown to Kenred his nephew, brother to our saint, having been chosen king only on account of

1 Some authors in Leland's Collectanea place her religious profession after the death of her father; but our account is supported by the authority of Bradshaw.

the nonage of that prince. Kenred governed his realm with great prudence and piety, making it his study, by all the means in his power, to prevent and root out all manner of vice, and promote the knowledge and love of God. After a reign of five years, he recommended his subjects to God, took leave of them, to their inexpressible grief, left his crown to Coëlred, his uncle's son, and, making a pilgrimage to Rome, there put on the monastic habit in 708, and persevered in great fervour till his happy death.

St. Wereburge, both by word and example, conducted to God the souls committed to her care. She was the most perfect model of meekness, humility, patience, and purity. Besides the church office, she recited every day the psalter on her knees, and, after matins, remained in the church in prayer, either prostrate on the ground or kneeling till day-light, and often bathed in tears. She never took more than one repast in the day, and read with wonderful delight the lives of the fathers of the desert. She foretold her death, visited all places under her care, and gave her last orders and exhortations. She prepared herself for her last hour by ardent invitations of her heavenly bridegroom, and languishing aspirations of divine love, in which she breathed forth her pure soul on the 3rd of February, at Trentham, about the end of the seventh century.

Her body as she had desired, was interred at Hanbury. Nine years after, in 708, it was taken up in presence of king Coëlred, his council, and many bishops, and being found entire and uncorrupt, was laid in a costly shrine on the 21st of June. In 875 her body was still entire; when, for fear of the Danish pirates, who were advanced as far as Repton, in the county of Derby, a royal seat (not Ripon, as Guthrie mistakes) within six miles of Hanbury, (in the county of Stafford,) her shrine was carried to West-Chester in the reign of king Alfred, who marrying his daughter Elfleda to Ethelred, created him first earl of Mercia, after the extinction of its kings. This valiant earl built and endowed with secular canonries a stately church, as a repository for the relics of Saint Wereburge, which afterward became the cathedral. His lady rebuilt other churches, walled in the city, and fortified

it with a strong castle against the Welch. 1 The great kings, Athelstan and Edgar, devoutly visited and enriched the church of St. Wereburge. In the reign of St. Edward the Confessor, Leofrick, earl of Mercia, and his pious wife, Godithe, rebuilt many churches and monasteries in those parts, founded the abbeys of Leonence, near Hereford, also that of Coventry, which city this earl made free. At Chester they repaired the collegiate church of St. John, and, out of their singular devotion to St. Wereburge, rebuilt her minster in a most stately manner. William the Conqueror gave to his kinsman, and most valiant knight, Hugh Lupus, the earldom of Chester, with the sovereign dignity of a palatinate, on condition he should win it. After having been thrice beaten and repulsed, he at last took the city, and divided the conquered lands of the country among his followers. In 1093, he removed the secular canons of Saint Wereburge, and in their stead placed monks under an abbot, brought over from Bec in Normandy. Earl Richard, son and heir to Lupus, going in pilgrimage to St. Winefrid's at Holywell, attributed to the intercession of St. Wereburge his preservation from an army of Welchmen, who came with an intention to intercept him. In memory of which, his constable, William, gave to her church the village of Newton, and founded the abbey of Norton on the Dee, at the place where his army miraculously forded that great river to the succour of his master, which place is still called Constable Sondes, says Bradshaw. The same learned author relates, from the third book of the Passionary of the Abbey, many miraculous cures of the sick, and preservations of that city from the assaults of the Welch, Danes, and Scots, and, in 1180, from a terrible fire, which threatened to consume the whole city, but was suddenly extinguished when the monks carried in procession the shrine of the virgin in devout prayer. Her body fell to dust soon after its translation to Chester. These relics being scattered in the reign of Henry VIII., her shrine was converted into the episcopal throne in the same church, and remains in that condition to this day. This monument is of stone, ten feet high, embellished with thirty curious antique images of kings of Mercia, and other princes, ancestors or relations of this saint. See Cooper's remarks on each.

ST. MARGARET, SURNAMED OF ENGLAND, V.

HER body is preserved entire, and resorted to with great devotion, in the church of the Cistercian nuns of Seauve Benoite,[2] in the diocess of Puy, in Velay, eight leagues from that city towards Lyons. The brothers of Sainte-Marthe, in the old edition of Gallia Christiana,[3] and Dom

1 This noble lady, heiress of the great virtues of her royal father, rebuilt, after the death of her husband, the churches and towns of Stafford, Warwick, Tamworth, and Shrewsbury; and founded, besides some others, the great abbey of St. Peter's in Gloucester, which church she enriched with the relics of St. Oswald, king and martyr, and in which she herself was buried. See Bradshaw, Dugdale, Camden.

2 Sylva Benedicta. 3 Gallia Christ. vetus, t. 4. p. 823.

Beaunier, the Maurist monk,[1] confirm the tradition of the place, that she was an English woman, and that her shrine is famous for miracles. Yet her life in old French, (a manuscript copy of which is preserved by the Jesuits of Clermont college, in Paris, with remarks of F. Peter Francis Chifflet,) tells us that she was by birth a noble Hungarian. Her mother, probably at least of English extraction, after the death of her husband, took her with her on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; and both led a very penitential religious life, first in that city, and afterwards at Bethlehem. St. Margaret having buried her mother in that country, made a pilgrimage to Montserrat in Spain, and afterward to our Lady's at Puy in Velay. Then she retired to the Cistercian nunnery of Seauve Benoite,[2] where she happily ended her mortal course in the twelfth century. See Gallia Christ. Nova in Diœc. Aniciensi seu Podiensi, t. 2. p. 777.

FEBRUARY IV.

SAINT ANDREW CORSINI,

BISHOP AND CONFESSOR.

From his two original lives written, the one by a disciple, the other by Peter Andrew Castagna, a friar of his Order, one hundred years after his death.

A. D. 1373.

This saint at his baptism was called Andrew, from the apostle of that name, on whose festival he was born in Florence in 1302. The family of

1 Recueil Hist. des Abbayes de France, t. 1. p. 314.

2 This St. Margaret perhaps never professed the Cistercian order. At least Henriquez, in the annals of that order, speaks only of one Margaret, an English woman, whose brother Thomas was banished by Henry II. among the friends and relations of St. Thomas of Canterbury. By this brother's advice she made her profession in the Cistercian nunnery at Laon, where she died in odour of sanctity in 1192. See Henriquez ad eum annum.

the Corsini was then one of the most illustrious of that commonwealth. This child was the fruit of the prayers of his pious parents, who consecrated him by vow to God before his birth. But notwithstanding the care his parents took to instil good principles into him, he spent the first part of his youth in vice and extravagance, in the company of such as were as wicked as himself. His devout mother Peregrina never ceased weeping and praying for his conversion, and one day said to him, with many sighs in the bitterness of her grief, "I see you are the wolf I saw in my sleep;" giving him to understand, that when with child of him she had dreamed she was brought to bed of a wolf, which running into a church was turned into a lamb. She added, that she and her husband had in a particular manner devoted him, while in the womb, to the service of God, under the protection of the blessed Virgin; and that in consequence of his being born not for them nor for the world, but for God, a very different kind of life from what he led was expected from him. This discourse made so strong an impression on his heart, that he went immediately to the Church of the Carmelite friars, and having prayed there for some time with great fervour before the altar of our Lady, he was so touched by God, that he took a resolution upon the spot to return no more to his father's house, but to embrace the religious state of life professed in that convent. He was readily admitted in the year 1318, and after a novitiate of a year and some months, during which he eluded the artifices of his worldly companions, and resolutely rejected the solicitations of an uncle who sought to draw him back into the world, he made his solemn profession. He never departed from the first fervour of his conversion. He strenuously laboured to subdue his passions by extreme humiliations, obedience even to the last person in

the house, by silence and prayer; and his superiors employed him in the meanest offices, often in washing the dishes in the scullery. The progress he made in learning, particularly in the holy scriptures and in divinity, was very great. In the year 1328 he was ordained priest; but to prevent the music and feast which his family had prepared, according to custom, for the day on which he was to say his first mass, he privately withdrew to a little convent seven miles out of town, where he offered, unknown, his first-fruits to God, with wonderful recollection and devotion. After some time employed in preaching at Florence he was sent to Paris, where he studied three years, and took some degrees. He prosecuted his studies some time at Avignon, with his uncle cardinal Corsini; and in 1332, returning to Florence, was chosen prior of that convent by a provincial chapter. God honoured his extraordinary virtue with the gifts of prophecy and miracles; and the astonishing fruits of his example and zealous preaching made him be looked upon as a second apostle of his country. Amongst other miracles and conquests of hardened souls, was the conversion of his cousin John Corsini, an infamous gamester; and the miraculous cure of an ulcer in his neck.

The bishop of Fiesoli, a town three miles from Florence, being dead, the chapter unanimously chose our saint to fill up the vacant see. Being informed of their proceedings, he hid himself, and remained so long concealed, that the canons, despairing to find him, were going to proceed to a second election; when, by a particular direction of divine providence, he was discovered by a child. Being consecrated bishop in the beginning of the year 1360, he redoubled his former austerities. To his hair-shirt he added an iron girdle. He daily said the seven penitential psalms and the litany of the saints, and gave himself a severe

discipline whilst he recited the litany. His bed was of vine-branches strewed on the floor. All his time was taken up in prayer or in his functions. Holy meditation and reading the scriptures he called his recreation from his labours. He avoided discourse with women as much as possible, and would never listen to flatterers or informers. His tenderness and care of the poor were incredible, and he had a particular regard for the bashful among them, that is, such as were ashamed to make known their distress; these he was diligent in seeking out, and assisted them with all possible secrecy. By an excellent talent for composing differences and dissentions, he never failed to reconcile persons at variance, and to appease all seditions that happened in his time, either at Fiesoli, or at Florence. Urban V. on this account, sent him vested with legatine power to Bologna, where the nobility and people were miserably divided. He happily pacified them, and their union continued during the remainder of his life. He was accustomed every Thursday to wash, with singular charity and humility, the feet of the poor: one excused himself, alleging, that his feet were full of ulcers and corruption: the saint insisted upon washing them notwithstanding, and they were immediately healed. In imitation of St. Gregory the Great, he kept a list of the names of all the poor, and furnished them all with allowances. He never dismissed any without an alms, for which purpose he once miraculously multiplied bread. He was taken ill whilst he was singing high mass on Christmas-night, in the year 1372. His fever increasing, he gave up his happy soul to God, with a surprising joy and tranquillity, on the 6th of January, 1373, being seventy-one years and five weeks old, having been twelve years bishop. He was honoured with many miracles, and immediately canonized by the voice of the people. The

state of Florence has often sensibly experienced his powerful intercession. Pope Eugenius IV. allowed his relics to be exposed to public veneration. He was canonized by Urban VIII. in 1629. His festival was transferred to the 4th of February. Clement XII. being of this family, in conjunction with his nephew the marquis of Corsini, sumptuously adorned the chapel of the Carmelite friars' church in Florence, in which the saint's body is kept. He also built and endowed a magnificent independant chapel in the great church of St. John Lateran, under the name of this his patron, in which the corpse of that pope is interred.

The example of all the saints confirms the fundamental maxim of our divine Redeemer, that the foundation of all solid virtue and of true sanctity, is to be laid by subduing the passions and dying to ourselves. Pride, sensuality, covetousness, and every vice must be rooted out of the heart, the senses must be mortified, the inconstancy of the mind must be settled, and its inclination to roving and dissipation fixed by recollection, and all depraved affections curbed. Both in cloisters and in the world many Christians take pains to become virtuous by multiplying religious practices, yet lose in a great measure the fruit of their labours, because they never study with their whole hearts to die to themselves. So long as self-love reigns in their souls, almost without control, this will often blind and deceive them, and will easily infect even their good works, and their devotion will be liable to a thousand illusions, and always very imperfect. Hence religious persons, after many years spent in the rigorous observance of their rule, still fail upon the least trial or contradiction which thwarts their favourite inclination, and are stopped in their spiritual progress as it were by every grain of sand in their way: their whole life they crawl like base insects in the mire

of their imperfections, whereas if they studied once in good earnest to curb sensuality and to renounce their own lights, their own will, and the inordinate love of themselves, difficulties would disappear before them, and they would in a short time arrive at the perfection of true virtue, and enjoy the liberty of the children of God, and his interior peace, the true road to which is only humility, meekness, and perfect self-denial. Did we know the treasure and happiness which this would procure us, we should, in imitation of the ancient holy monks, desire to meet with superiors who would exercise us by the severest trials, and think ourselves most obliged to those who apply the strongest remedies to purge and cure our sick souls.

SS. PHILEAS, MM.

BISHOP OF THMUIS AND PHILOROMUS.

PHILEAS was a rich nobleman of Thmuis[1] in Egypt, very eloquent and learned. Being converted to the faith, he was chosen bishop of that city; but was taken and carried prisoner to Alexandria by the persecutors, under the successors of Dioclesian. Eusebius has preserved part of a letter which he wrote in his dungeon, and sent to his flock to comfort and encourage them.[2] Describing the sufferings of his fellow confessors at Alexandria, he says that every one had full liberty allowed to insult, strike, and beat them with rods, whips, or clubs. Some of the confessors with their hands behind their backs, were tied to pillars, their bodies stretched out with engines,

1 Thmuis, capital of the Nomos, or district of Mendes, is called, by Strabo, Mendes; which word in the Egyptian tongue signifies a goat, Pan being there worshipped with extraordinary superstition under the figure of a goat. This city was anciently one of the largest and richest in Egypt, as Amm. Marcellinus (l. 22.) testifies; but is now reduced to the condition of a mean village, and called Themoi, or rather Themowia. See Le Quien. Oriens Christ. t. 2. p. 538.

2 Eus. Hist. l. 8. c. 10. p. 302.

and their sides, belly, thighs, legs, and cheeks hideously torn with iron hooks: others were hung by one hand, suffering excessive pain by the stretching of their joints: others hung by both hands, their bodies being drawn down. The governor thought no treatment too bad for Christians. Some expired on the racks; others expired soon after they were taken down; others were laid on their backs in the dungeons, with their legs stretched out in the wooden stocks to the fourth hole, &c. Culcian, who had been prefect of Thebais, was then governor of all Egypt, under the tyrant Maximinus, but afterward lost his head in 313, by the order of Licinius. We have a long interrogatory of St. Phileas before him from the presidial registers. Culcian, after many other things, asked him, "Was Christ God?" The saint answered, "Yes;" and alleged his miracles as a proof of his divinity. The governor professed a great regard for his quality and merit, and said, "If you were in misery, or necessity, you should be dispatched without more ado; but as you have riches and estates sufficient not only for yourself and family, but for the maintenance almost of a whole province, I pity you, and do all in my power to save you." The counsellors and lawyers, desirous also of saving him, said, "He had already sacrificed in the Phrontisterium, (or academy for the exercises of literature.)" Phileas cried out, "I have not by any immolation; but say barely that I have sacrificed, and you will say no more than the truth." Having been confined there some time, he might perhaps have said mass in that place.[1]

His wife, children, brother, and other relations, persons of distinction, and Pagans, were present at the trial. The governor hoping to overcome him by tenderness for them, said, "See how sor-

1 See Tillemont and Ceillier

rowful your wife stands with her eyes fixed upon you." Phileas replied, "Jesus Christ, the Saviour of souls, calls me to his glory: and he can also if he pleases call my wife." The counsellors out of compassion, said to the judge, "Phileas begs a delay." Culcian said to him, "I grant it you most willingly, that you may consider what to do." Phileas replied, "I have considered, and it is my unchangable resolution to die for Jesus Christ." Then all the counsellors, the emperor's lieutenant, who was the first magistrate of the city, all the other officers of justice, and his relations, fell down together at his feet, embracing his knees, and conjuring him to have compassion on his disconsolate family, and not to abandon his children in their tender years whilst his presence was absolutely necessary for them. But he, like a rock unshaken by the impetuous waves that dash against it, stood unmoved; and raising his heart to God, protested aloud that he owned no other kindred but the apostles and martyrs. Philoromus, a noble Christian, was present: he was a tribune or colonel, and the emperor's treasurer-general in Alexandria, and had his tribunal in the city, where he sat every day hearing and judging causes, attended by many officers in great state. Admiring the prudence and inflexible courage of Phileas, and moved with indignation against his adversaries, he cried out to them, "Why strive ye to overcome this brave man, and to make him, by an impious compliance with men, renounce God? Do not you see that, contemplating the glory of heaven, he makes no account of earthly things?" This speech drew upon him the indignation of the whole assembly, who in rage demanded that both might be condemned to die. To which the judge readily assented.

As they were led out to execution, the brother of Phileas, who was a judge, said to the governor, "Phileas, desires his pardon." Culcian therefore

called him back, and asked him if it was true. He answered, "No: God forbid. Do not listen to this unhappy man. Far from desiring the reversion of my sentence, I think myself much obliged to the emperors, to you, and to your court: for by your means I become co-heir with Christ, and shall enter this very day into the possession of his kingdom." Hereupon he was remanded to the place of execution, where having made his prayer aloud, and exhorted the faithful to constancy and perseverance, he was beheaded with Philoromus. The exact time of their martyrdom is not known, but it happened between the years 306 and 312. Their names stand in the ancient martyrologies. See Eusebius, Hist. l. 8. c. 9. St. Hier. in Catal. in Philea; and their original beautiful acts, published by Combefis, Henschenius, and Ruinart.

ST. GILBERT, A.

FOUNDER OF THE GILBERTINS.

He was born at Sempringham in Lincolnshire, and after a clerical education, was ordained priest by the bishop of Lincoln. For some time he taught a free-school, training up youth in regular exercises of piety and learning. The advowson of the parsonages of Sempringham and Tirington, being the right of his father, he was presented by him to those united livings, in 1123. He gave all the revenues of them to the poor, except a small sum for bare necessaries, which he reserved out of the first living. By his care his parishioners seemed to lead the lives of religious men, and were known to be of his flock by their conversation, wherever they went. He gave a rule to seven holy virgins, who lived in strict inclosure in a house adjoining to the wall of his parish church of St. Andrew at Sempringham, and another afterward to a community of men, who desired to live under his

direction. The latter was drawn from the rule of the canon regulars; but that given to his nuns, from St. Bennet's: but to both he added many particular constitutions. Such was the origin of the Order of the Gilbertins, the approbation of which he procured from pope Eugenius III. At length he entered the order himself, but resigned the government of it sometime before his death, when he lost his sight. His diet was chiefly roots and pulse, and so sparing, that others wondered how he could subsist. He had always at table a dish which he called, The plate of the Lord Jesus, in which he put all that was best of what was served up, and this was for the poor. He always wore a hair shirt, took his short rest sitting, and spent great part of the night in prayer. In this his favourite exercise, his soul found those wings on which she continually soared to God. During the exile of St. Thomas of Canterbury, he and the other superiors of his Order were accused of having sent him succours abroad. The charge was false; yet the saint chose rather to suffer imprisonment and the danger of the suppression of his Order, than to deny it, lest he should seem to condemn what would have been good and just. He departed to our Lord on the 3rd of February, 1190, being one hundred and six years old.

Miracles wrought at his tomb were examined and approved by Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, and the commissioners of pope Innocent III. in 1201, and he was canonized by that pope the year following. The Statutes of the Gilbertins, and Exhortations to his Brethren, are ascribed to him. See his life by a contemporary writer, in Dugdale's Monasticon, t. 2. p. 696, and the same in Henschenius, with another from Capgrave of the same age. See also Harpsfield.

ST. JANE, JOAN, OR JOANNA,

OF VALOIS, QUEEN OF FRANCE.

She was daughter of king Lewis XI. and Charlotte of Savoy, born in 1464. Her low stature and deformed body rendered her the object of

her father's aversion, who notwithstanding married her to Lewis duke of Orleans, his cousin-german, in 1476. She obtained his life of her brother Charles VIII. who had resolved to put him to death for rebellion. Yet nothing could conquer his antipathy against her, from which she suffered every thing with patience, making exercises of piety her chief occupation and comfort. Her husband coming to the crown of France in 1498, under the name of Lewis XII. having in view an advantageous match with Anne, the heiress of Brittany, and the late king's widow, alleging also the nullity of his marriage with Jane, chiefly upon account of his being forced to it by Lewis XI. applied to pope Alexander VI. for commissaries to examine the matter according to law. These having taken cognizance of the affair, declared the marriage void; nor did Jane make any opposition to the divorce, but rejoiced to see herself at liberty, and in a condition to serve God in a state of greater perfection, and attended with fewer impediments in his service. She therefore meekly acquiesced in the sentence, and the king pleased at her submission, gave her the dutchy of Berry, besides Pontoise and other townships. She resided at Bourges, wore only sackcloth, and addicted herself entirely to the exercises of mortification and prayer, and to works of charity, in which she employed all her great revenues. By the assistance of her confessarius, a virtuous Franciscan friar, called Gabriel Maria, as he always signed his name, she instituted in 1500, the Order of nuns of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin.[1]

1 The imitation of the ten principal virtues, of which the mysteries of the Blessed Virgin, honoured by the Church in her yearly festivals, furnish perfect models, is the peculiar end of this religious institute, which takes its name from the first and principal of the joyful mysteries of the mother of God. These nuns wear a grey habit with a red scapular, with a gold cross (or of silver gilt) hanging before their breast, and a gold ring on one of their fingers. A noble Genoese

It was approved by Julius II. Leo X. Paul V. and Gregory XV. The nuns wear a black veil, a white cloak, a red scapular, and a brown habit with a cross, and a cord for a girdle. The superioress is only called Ancelle, or servant for humility. St. Jane took the habit herself in 1504, but died on the 4th of February, 1505.

The Hugonots burned her remains at Bourges, in 1562. (See Henschenius, p. 578.) She was canonized by Clement XII. in 1738, but had been venerated at Bourges from the time of her death. See the brief of Benedict XIV. concerning her immemorial veneration, t. 2. de Canoniz. l. 2. c. 24. p. 296. Bullarii, t. 16. p. 104. and Helyot, Hist. des Ord. Rel. t. 7. p. 339. Also Henschenius.

ST. ISIDORE OF PELUSIUM.

He was a monk from his youth, and became superior of a monastery in the neighbourhood of that city, in the fifth age. Facundus and Suidas assure us that he was promoted to the dignity of priest. He was looked upon as a living rule of religious perfection, and treated by his patriarch St. Cyril and the other prelates of his time, as their father. He chose St. Chrysostom for his model. We have still extant two thousand and twelve of his letters, abounding with excellent instructions of piety, and with theological and critical learning. They are concise, and the style natural, very elegant, agreeable, full of fire and penetration. Possevin laments that they are not in use as a classic author for the Greek language. His prudence, undaunted zeal, profound humility, ardent love of God, and other virtues, shine admirably in them. He died about the year 449. See Photius, Bibl. Cod.

widow, called Mary Victoria Fornaro, instituted in 1604, another Order of the same title, called of the Celestial Annunciades, Annuntiatæ Cœlestinæ. As an emblem of heaven, their habit is white, with a blue mantle to represent the azure of the heavens. The most rigorous poverty and a total separation from the world are prescribed. The religious are only allowed to speak to externs six times in a year, and then only to near relations, the men to those of the first, the women to those of the first and second degree. See the life of ven. Mary Victoria Fornaro, by F. Ambrose Spinola, Jesuit; and Hist. des Ordres Relig. t. 4. p. 297.

ST. REMBERT, ARCHBISHOP OF BREMEN, C.

He was a native of Flanders, near Bruges, and a monk in the neighbouring monastery of Turholt. St. Anscharius called him to his assistance in his missionary labours, and in his last sickness recommended him for his successor, saying, "Rembert is more worthy to be archbishop, than I to discharge the office of his deacon." After his death, in 865, St. Rembert was unanimously chosen archbishop of Hamburgh and Bremen, and superintended all the churches of Sweden, Denmark, and the Lower Germany, finishing the work of their conversion. He also began the conversion of the Sclavi and the Vandals, now called Brandenburghers. He sold the sacred vessels to redeem captives from the Normans; and gave the horse on which he was riding for the ransom of a virgin taken by the Sclavi. He was most careful never to lose a moment of time from serious duties and prayer; and never to interrupt the attention of his mind to God in his exterior functions. He died on the 11th of June in 888, but is commemorated in the Roman Martyrology on the 4th of February, the day on which he was chosen archbishop. His life of St. Anscharius is admired, both for the author's accuracy and piety, and for the elegance and correctness of the composition. His letter to Walburge, first abbess of Nienherse, is a pathetic exhortation to humility and virginity. The see of Hamburgh being united to Bremen by St. Anscharius, this became the metropolitan church of all the north of Germany: but the city becoming Lutheran, expelled the Archbishop in the reign of Charles V. This see and that of Ferden were secularized and yielded to the Swedes by the treaty of Westphalia, in 1648. See

his life written soon after his death, in Henschenius, p. 555. Mabillon, Act. Bened. &c.

ST. MODAN, ABBOT IN SCOTLAND, C.

DRYBURGH, situated near Mailros, was anciently one of the most famous monasteries in Scotland: in this house of saints Modan dedicated himself to God, about the year 522. Being persuaded that Christian perfection is to be attained by holy prayer and contemplation, and by a close union of our souls with God, he gave six or seven hours every day to prayer, and moreover seasoned with it all his other actions and employments. A spirit of prayer is founded in the purity of the affections, the fruit of self-denial, humility and obedience. Hence proceeded the ardour with which our saint studied to crucify his flesh and senses by the practice of the greatest austerities, to place himself beneath all creatures by the most profound and sincere humility, and in all things to subject his will to that of his superiors with such an astonishing readiness and cheerfulness, that they unanimously declared they never saw any one so perfectly divested of all self-will, and dead to himself as Modan. The abbacy falling vacant, he was raised against his will to that dignity. In this charge his conduct was a clear proof of the well-known maxim, that no man possesses the art of governing others well unless he is perfectly master of that of obeying. His inflexible firmness, in maintaining every point of monastic discipline, was tempered by the most winning sweetness and charity, and an unalterable calmness and meekness. Such moreover was his prudence, and such the unction of his words in instructing or reproving others, that his precepts and very reprimands gave pleasure, gained all hearts, and inspired the love, and communicated the spirit of every duty. He preached the

faith at Stirling and in other places near the Forth, especially at Falkirk; but frequently interrupted his apostolic employments to retire among the craggy mountains of Dunbarton, where he usually spent thirty or forty days at once in the heavenly exercises of devout contemplation, in which he enjoyed a kind of anticipation or foretaste of the delights in which consists the happiness of the blessed. He died in his retirement near Alcluid, (a fortress on the river Cluid,) since called Dunbritton, now Dunbarton. His death is usually placed in the seventh century, though some think he flourished later. His relics were kept with singular veneration in a famous church of his name at Rosneith. He is also titular saint of the great church at Stirling, and honoured particularly at Dunbarton and Falkirk. See Hector Boetius, Lesley, King in his calendar, the Breviary of Aberdeen, and the Chronicle of Scone: also Bollandus, p. 497.

ST. JOSEPH OF LEONISSA, C.

THIS saint was born in 1556, at Leonissa, a small town near Otricoli, in the ecclesiastical state, and at eighteen years of age made his profession among the Capuchin friars, in the place of his birth, taking the name of Joseph; for before he was called Eufranius. He was always mild, humble, chaste, patient, charitable, mortified, and obedient to an heroic degree: with the utmost fervour, and on the most perfect motive of religion, he endeavoured to glorify God in all his actions. Three days in the week he usually took no other sustenance than bread and water, and passed several Lents in the year after the same manner. His bed was hard boards, with the trunk of a vine for his pillow. The love of injuries, contumelies, and humiliations, made him find in them his greatest joy. He looked upon himself as the basest of

sinners, and said, that indeed God by his infinite mercy had preserved him from grievous crimes; but that by his sloth, ingratitude, and infidelity to the divine grace, he deserved to have been abandoned by God above all creatures. By this humility and mortification he crucified in himself *the old man with his deeds*, and prepared his soul for heavenly communications in prayer and contemplation, which was his assiduous exercise. The sufferings of Christ were the favourite and most ordinary object of his devotions. He usually preached with a crucifix in his hands, and the fire of his words kindled a flame in the hearts of his hearers and penitents. In 1587 he was sent by his superiors into Turkey, to labour as a missioner among the Christians at Pera, a suburb of Constantinople. He there encouraged and served the Christian galley-slaves with wonderful charity and fruit, especially during a violent pestilence with which he himself was seized, but recovered. He converted many apostates, one of whom was a bashaw. By preaching the faith to the Mahometans he incurred the utmost severity of the Turkish laws, was twice imprisoned, and the second time condemned to a cruel death. He was hung on a gibbet by one hand, which was fastened by a chain, and pierced with a sharp hook at the end of the chain; and by one foot in the same manner. Having been some time on the gibbet, he was released,[1] and the sentence of death was changed by the sultan into banishment. Wherefore embarking for Italy, he landed at Venice; and after two years' absence arrived at Leonissa. He resumed his apostolic labours in his own country with extraordinary zeal, and an uncommon benediction from heaven. To complete his sacrifice, he suffered very much to-

1 Some say he was released by an angel, after hanging three days; but this circumstance is not mentioned by Benedict XIV. in the decree for his canonization, p. 559.

wards the end of his life from a painful cancer, to extirpate which he underwent two incisions without the least groan or complaint, only repeating, "Holy Mary, pray for us miserable afflicted sinners:" and holding all the while a crucifix in his hand, on which he fixed his eyes. When some said before the operation, that he ought to be bound or held, he pointed to the crucifix, saying, "This is the strongest band: this will hold me unmoved better than any cords could do." The operation proving unsuccessful, the saint happily expired, on the fourth day of February, in 1612, being fifty-eight years old. His name was inserted in the Roman Martyrology on the 4th of February.

See the history of his miracles in the acts of his beatification, which ceremony was performed by Clement XII. in 1737, and in those of his canonization, by Benedict XIV. in 1746. Acta Canonizationis 5 Sanctorum, viz. Fidelis a Sigmaringa, M. Camilli de Lelis, Petri Regalati, Josephi a Leonissa, and Catharinæ de Riccis, a Benedicto XIV. an. 1746, printed at Rome an. 1749, p. 11. 85, and the bull for his canonization, p. 558. Also Bullar. t. 15. p. 127.

FEBRUARY V.

ST. AGATHA, VIRGIN AND MARTYR.

Her acts are very ancient; they are abridged by Tillemont, t. 3. p. 409.

A. D. 251.

THE cities of Palermo and Catana in Sicily, dispute the honour of her birth: but they do much better who, by copying her virtues, and claiming her patronage, strive to become her fellow-citizens in heaven. It is agreed that she received the crown of martyrdom at Catana, in the persecution of Decius, in the third consulship of that prince, in the year of our Lord 251. She was of a rich and illustrious family, and having been

consecrated to God from her tender years, triumphed over many assualts upon her chastity. Quintianus, a man of consular dignity, bent on gratifying both his lust and avarice, imagined he should easily compass his wicked designs on Agatha's person and estate by means of the Emperor's edict against the Christians. He therefore caused her to be apprehended and brought before him at Catana. Seeing herself in the hands of the persecutors, she made this prayer: "Jesus Christ, Lord of all things, you see my heart, you know my desire: possess alone all that I am. I am your sheep, make me worthy to overcome the devil." She wept and prayed for courage and strength all the way she went. On her appearance, Quintianus gave orders for her being put into the hands of Aphrodisia, a most wicked woman, who with six daughters, all prostitutes, kept a common stew. The saint suffered in this infamous place, assaults and stratagems against her virtue, infinitely more terrible to her than any tortures or death itself. But placing her confidence in God, she never ceased with sighs and most earnest tears to implore his protection, and by it was an over-match for all their hellish attempts, the whole month she was there. Quintianus being informed of her constancy after thirty days, ordered her to be brought before him. The virgin, in her first interrogatory, told him that to be a servant of Jesus Christ was the most illustrious nobility and true liberty. The judge, offended at her resolute answers, commaded her to be buffeted, and led to prison. She entered it with great joy, recommending her future conflict to God. The next day she was arraigned a second time at the tribunal, and answered with equal constancy that Jesus Christ was her life and her salvation. Quintianus then ordered her to be stretched on the rack, which torment was usually accompanied with stripes, the tearing of the sides

with iron hooks, and burning them with torches or matches. The governor, enraged to see her suffer all this with cheerfulness, commanded her breast to be tortured, and afterward to be cut off. At which she made him this reproach: "Cruel tyrant, do you not blush to torture this part of my body, you that sucked the breasts of a woman yourself?" He remanded her to prison with a severe order, that neither salves nor food should be allowed her. But God would be himself her physician, and the apostle St. Peter in a vision comforted her, healed all her wounds, and filled her dungeon with a heavenly light. Quintianus, four days after, not the least moved at the miraculous cure of her wounds, caused her to be rolled naked over live coals mixed with broken potsherds. Being carried back to prison, she made this prayer: "Lord, my Creator, you have ever protected me from the cradle. You have taken from me the love of the world, and given me patience to suffer: receive now my soul." After which words she sweetly gave up the ghost. Her name is inserted in the canon of the mass, in the calendar of Carthage, as ancient as the year 530, and in all martyrologies of the Latins and Greeks.

Pope Symmachus built a church in Rome on the Aurelian way, under her name, about the year 500, which is fallen to decay. (Fronteau Cal. p. 25.) St. Gregory the Great enriched a church which he purged from the Arian impiety, with her relics (Dial. l. 3. c. 30,) which it still possesses. This church had been rebuilt in her honour by Ricimer, general of the western empire, in 460. Gregory II. built another famous church at Rome, under her invocation, in 726, which Clement VIII. gave to the congregation of the Christian doctrine. St. Gregory the Great, (L. 1. ep. 52.) ordered some of her relics to be placed in the church of the monastery of St. Stephen, in the Isle of Capreæ, now Capri. The chief part which remained at Catana, was carried to Constantinople by the Greek general, who drove the Saracens out of Sicily about the year 1040: these were brought back to Catana in 1127, a relation of which translation, written by Mauritius, who was then bishop, is recorded by Rocci Pyrrho, and Bollandus. (Feb. t. 1. p. 647.) The same authors relate in what manner the torrent of burning sulphur and stones which issue from mount Ætna, in great eruptions, was several times averted from the walls of Catana, by the veil of St. Agatha (taken out of her tomb) which was carried in procession. Also that through her intercession Malta (where she

is honoured as patroness of the island) was preserved from the Turks who invaded it in 1551. Small portions of relics of St. Agatha are said to be distributed in many places.

The perfect purity of intention by which St. Agatha was entirely dead to the world and herself, and sought only to please God, is the circumstance which sanctified her sufferings, and rendered her sacrifice complete. The least cross which we bear, the least action which we perform in this disposition, will be a great holocaust, and a most acceptable offering. We have frequently something to suffer, sometimes an aching pain in the body, at other times some trouble of mind, often some dissapointment, some humbling rebuke, or reproach, or the like. If we only bear these trials with patience, when others are witnesses, or if we often speak of them, or are fretful under them, or if we bear patiently public affronts or great trials, yet sink under those which are trifling, and are sensible to small, or secret injuries, it is evident that we have not attained to true purity of intention in our patience; that we are not dead to ourselves, and love not to disappear to the eyes of creatures, but court them, and take a secret complacency in things which appear great. We profess ourselves ready to die for Christ; yet cannot bear the least cross or humiliation. How agreeable to our divine spouse is the sacrifice of a soul which suffers in silence, desiring to have no other witness of her patience than God alone, who sends her trials; which shuns superiority and honours, but takes all care possible that no one knows the humility or modesty of such a refusal; which suffers humiliations, and seeks no comfort or reward but from God. This simplicity and purity of heart, this love of being hid in God through Jesus Christ, is the perfection of all our sacrifices, and the complete victory over self-love, which it attacks and forces out of

its strongest intrenchments: this says to Christ, with St. Agatha, "Possess alone all that I am."

THE MARTYRS OF JAPAN.

See the triumph of the martyrs of Japan, by F. Trigault, from the year 1612 to 1620, the history of Japan, by F. Crasset to the year 1658, and that by the learned F. Charlevoix in nine volumes: also the life of F. Spinola, &c.

THE empire of Japan, so called from one of the islands of which it is composed, was discovered by certain Portuguese merchants, about the year 1541. It is generally divided into several little kingdoms, all which obey one sovereign emperor. The capital cities are Meaco and Jedo. The manners of this people are the reverse of ours in many things. Their characteristic is pride, and an extravagant love of honour. They adore idols of grotesque shapes, by which they represent certain famous wicked ancestors: the chiefest are Amida and Xacha. Their priests are called Bonzas, and all obey the Jaco, or high-priest. St. Francis Xavier arrived in Japan in 1549, baptized great numbers, and whole provinces received the faith. The great kings of Arima, Bungo, and Omura, sent a solemn embassy of obedience to pope Gregory XIII. in 1582: and in 1587 there were in Japan above two hundred thousand Christians, and among these several kings, princes, and bonzas, but in 1588, Cambacundono, the haughty emperor, having usurped the honours of a deity, commanded all the Jesuits to leave his dominions within six months: however, many remained there disguised. In 1592, the persecution was renewed, and several Japanese converts received the crown of martyrdom. The emperor Tagcosama, one of the proudest and most vicious of men, was worked up into rage and jealousy by a suspicion suggested by certain European merchants desirous of the monopoly of this trade, that the view of the missionaries in preaching

the Christian faith was to facilitate the conquest of their country by the Portuguese or Spaniards. Three Jesuits and six Franciscans were crucified on a hill near Nangasaqui in 1597. The latter were partly Spaniards and partly Indians, and had at their head F. Peter Baptist, commissary of his Order, a native of Avila, in Spain. As to the Jesuits, one was Paul Michi, a noble Japanese and an eminent preacher, at that time thirty-three years old. The other two, John Gotto and James Kisai, were admitted into the Society in prison a little before they suffered. Several Japanese converts suffered with them. The martyrs were twenty-six in number, and among them were three boys who used to serve the friars at mass; two of them were fifteen years of age, and the third only twelve, yet each showed great joy and constancy in their sufferings. Of these martyrs, twenty-four had been brought to Meaco, where only a part of their left ears was cut off, by a mitigation of the sentence which had commanded the amputation of their noses and both ears. They were conducted through many towns and public places, their cheeks stained with blood, for a terror to others. When the twenty-six soldiers of Christ were arrived at the place of execution near Nangasaqui, they were allowed to make their confession to two Jesuits of the convent, in that town, and being fastened to crosses by cords and chains, about their arms and legs, and an iron collar about their necks, were raised into the air, the foot of each cross falling into a hole prepared for it in the ground. The crosses were planted in a row, about four feet asunder, and each martyr had an executioner near him with a spear ready to pierce his side, for such is the Japanese manner of crucifixion. As soon as all the crosses were planted, the executioners lifted up their lances, and at a signal given, all pierced the martyrs almost in the same

instant; upon which they expired and went to receive the reward of their sufferings. Their blood and garments were procured by Christians, and miracles were wrought by them. Urban VIII. ranked them among the martyrs, and they are honoured on the 5th of February, the day of their triumph. The rest of the missionaries were put on board a vessel, and carried out of the dominions, except twenty-eight priests, who staid behind in disguise. Tagcosama dying, ordered his body should not be burned, as was the custom in Japan, but preserved enshrined in his palace of Fuximi, that he might be worshipped among the gods under the title of the new god of war. The most stately temple in the empire was built to him, and his body deposited in it. The Jesuits returned soon after, and though the missionaries were only an hundred in number, they converted, in 1599, forty thousand, and in 1600, above thirty thousand, and built fifty churches; for the people were highly scandalized to see him worshipped as a god, whom they had remembered a most covetous, proud, and vicious tyrant. But in 1602, Cubosama renewed the bloody persecution, and many Japanese converts were beheaded, crucified, or burned. In 1614, new cruelties were exercised to overcome their constancy, as by bruising their feet between certain pieces of wood, cutting off or squeezing their limbs one after another, applying red-hot irons or slow fires, flaying off the skin of the fingers, putting burning coals to their hands, tearing off the flesh with pincers, or thrusting reeds into all parts of their bodies, and turning them about to tear their flesh, till they should say they would forsake their faith: all which, innumerable persons, even children, bore with invincible constancy till death. In 1616, Xogun succeeding his father Cubosama in the empire, surpassed him in cruelty. The most illustrious of these religious heroes was F.

Charles Spinola. He was of a noble Genoese family, and entered the Society at Nola, whilst his uncle cardinal Spinola was bishop of that city. Out of zeal and a desire of martyrdom, he begged to be sent on the Japanese mission. He arrived there in 1602; laboured many years in that mission, gained many to Christ, by his mildness, and lived in great austerity, for his usual food was only a little rice and herbs. He suffered four years a most cruel imprisonment, during which, in burning fevers, he was not able to obtain of his keepers a drop of cold water out of meals: yet he wrote from his dungeon, "Father, how sweet and delightful is it to suffer for Jesus Christ! I have learned this better by experience than I am able to express, especially since we are in these dungeons where we fast continually. The strength of my body fails me, but my joy increases as I see death draw nearer. O what a happiness for me, if next Easter I shall sing the heavenly Alleluia in the company of the blessed!" In a long letter to his cousin Maximilian Spinola, he said, "O, if you had tasted the delights with which God fills the souls of those who serve him, and suffer for him, how would you contemn all that the world can promise! I now begin to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, since for his love I am in prison, where I suffer much. But I assure you, that when I am fainting with hunger, God hath fortified me by his sweet consolations, so that I have looked upon myself as well recompensed for his service. And though I were yet to pass many years in prison, the time would appear short, through the extreme desire which I feel of suffering for him, who even here so well repays our labours. Besides other sickness, I have been afflicted with a continual fever a hundred days without any remedies or proper nourishment. All this time my heart was so full of joy, that it seemed to me too narrow to contain it. I have

never felt any equal to it, and I thought myself at the gates of paradise." His joy was excessive at the news that he was condemned to be burnt alive, and he never ceased to thank God for so great a mercy, of which he owned himself unworthy. He was conducted from his last prison at Omura to Nangasaqui, where fifty martyrs suffered together on a hill within sight of that city, nine Jesuits, four Franciscans, and six Dominicans, the rest seculars: twenty-five were burned, the rest beheaded. The twenty-five stakes were fixed all in a row, and the martyrs tied to them. Fire was set to the end of the pile of wood twenty-five feet from the martyrs, and gradually approached them, two hours before it reached them. F. Spinola stood unmoved, with his eyes lifted up towards heaven, till the cords which tied him being burnt, he fell into the flames, and was consumed on the 2nd of September, in 1622, being fifty-eight years old. Many others, especially Jesuits, suffered variously, being either burnt at slow fires, crucified, beheaded, or thrown into a burning mountain, or hung with their heads downward in pits, which cruel torment usually put an end to their lives in three or four days. In 1639, the Portuguese and all other Europeans, except the Dutch, were forbid to enter Japan, even for trade: the very ambassadors which the Portuguese sent thither were beheaded. In 1642, five Jesuits landed secretly in Japan, but were soon discovered, and after cruel tortures were hung in pits till they expired. Thus hath Japan encouraged the church militant, and filled the triumphant with glorious martyrs: though only the first mentioned have as yet been publicly declared such by the holy See, who are mentioned in the new edition of the Roman Martyrology published by Benedict XIV. in 1749.

APPENDIX.

ON THE MARTYRS OF CHINA.

THE devil set all his engines to work, that he might detain in his captivity those great nations, which, by the inscrutable judgments of God, lay yet buried in the night of infidelity, and by their vicious habits and prejudices had almost extinguished the law written in their breast by their Creator. The pure light of the gospel sufficed to dispel the dark clouds of idolatry by its own brightness; but the passions of men were not to be subdued but by the omnipotent hand of Him who promised that his holy faith and salvation should be propagated throughout all nations. All the machinations of hell were not able to defeat the divine mercy, not even by the scandal of those false Christians, whom jealousy, covetousness, and the spirit of the world blinded and seared to every feeling, not only of religion, but even of humanity. Religious missionaries, filled with the spirit of the apostles, and armed with the power of God, baffled obstacles which seemed insurmountable to flesh and blood; and by their zeal, charity, patience, humility, meekness, mortification, and invincible courage, triumphantly planted the standard of the cross in a world heretofore unknown to us, and but lately discovered, not by blind chance, but for these great purposes of divine providence.

It appears from the Chinese annals, in F. Du Halde's History of China, that this vast empire is the most ancient in the world. Mr. Shuckford (B. 1, 2. 6.) thinks, that their first king Fo-hi was Noah himself, whom he imagines to have settled here soon after the deluge Mr. Swinton, in the twentieth tome of the Universal History, justly censures this conjecture, and rejects the first dynasty of the Chinese history; which Mr Jackson in his chronology, with others, vindicates. We must own that the Chinese annals are unanimous in asserting this first dynasty. whatever some have, by mistake, wrote against it; and this antiquity agrees very well with the chronology of the Septuagint, or that of the Samaritan Pentateuch, one of which several learned men seem at present much inclined to embrace. As for the notion that the Chinese are originally an Egyptian colony, and that their first dynasty is borrowed from the latter; notwithstanding my great personal respect for the worthy author of that system, it stands in need of proofs founded in facts, not in conjectures. A

little acquaintance with languages shows, that we frequently find in certain words and circumstances a surprising analogy, in some things, between several words or customs of the most disparate languages and manners of very distant countries: several Persian words are the same in English, and it would be as plausible a system to advance that one of these nations was a colony of the other. From such circumstances it only results, that all nations have one common original. Allowing therefore the Chinese an antiquity of which they are infinitely jealous, Fo-hi was perhaps either Sem himself, or one that lived very soon after the flood, from whom this empire derives its origin. Confucius was the great philosopher of this people, who drew up the plan of their laws and religion. He is thought to have flourished about the time of King Solomon, or not much later. He was of royal extraction, and a man of severe morals. His writings contain many sublime moral truths, and show him to have been the greatest philosopher that ever lived. As he came nearer to the patriarchs in time, and received a more perfect tradition from them, he surpassed, in the excellency of his moral precepts, Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato. He taught men to obey, honour, and fear the Lord of Heaven, to love their neighbour as themselves, to subdue irregular inclinations, and to be guided in all things by reason: that God is the original and ultimate end of all things, which he produced and preserves, himself eternal, infinite, and immutable; one, supremely holy, supremely intelligent, and invisible. He often mentioned the expectation of a Messias to come, a perfect guide and teacher of virtue; calling him the holy man, and the holy person, who is expected to come on earth. It is a tradition in China, that he was often heard to say, "That in the West the Holy One will appear." This he delivered from the patriarchal tradition; but he not only mentions heavenly spirits, the ministers of God, but he also ordains the worship of these spirits by religious rites and sacrifices, and concurs with the idolatry which was established in his time. St. Francis Xavier had made the conversion of China the object of his zealous wishes; but died, like another Moses, in sight of it. His religious brethren long attempted in vain to gain admittance into that country; but the jealousy of the inhabitants refused entrance to all strangers. However, God was pleased, at the repeated prayers of his servants, to crown them with success The Portuguese made a settlement at Macao, an island within sight of China, and obtained leave to go thither twice a year, for to trade at the fairs of Canton.

F. Matthew Ricci. a Roman Jesuit, a good mathematician, and a disciple of Clavius, being settled a missionary at Macao, went over with them several times into China, and in 1583, obtained leave of the governor to reside there with two other Jesuits. A little catechism which he published, and a map of the world, in which he placed the first meridian in China, to make it the middle of the world, according to the Chinese notion, gained him many friends and admirers. In 1595, he established a second residence of Jesuits, at Nanquin; and made himself admired there by teaching the true figure of the earth, the cause of lunar eclipses, &c. He also built an observatory, and converted many to the faith. In 1600, he went to Pekin, and carried with him a clock, a watch, and many other presents to the emperor, who granted him a residence in that capital. He converted many, and among these several officers of the court, one of whom was Paul Siu, afterward prime minister, under whose protection a flourishing church was established in his country, Xankai, (in the province of Nanquin,) in which were forty thousand Christians, when the late persecution began. Francis Martinez, a Chinese Jesuit, having converted a famous doctor, was beaten several times, and at length expired under the torment. Ricci died in 1617, having lived in favour with the emperor Vanlie.

F. Adam Schall, a Jesuit from Cologn, by his mathematics, becoming known to the emperor Zonchi: but in 1636, that prince laid violent hands upon himself that he might not fall into the hands of two rebels who had taken Pekin. The Chinese called in Xunte, king of a frontier nation of the Tartars, to their assistance, who recovered Pekin, but demanded the empire for the prize of his victory; and his son Chunchi obtained quiet possession of it in 1650. From that time the Tartars have been emperors of China, but they govern it by its own religion and laws. They frequently visit their original territories but rather treat them as the conquered country. Chunchi esteemed F. Schall, called him father, and was favourable to the Christians. After his death the four regents put to death five Christian Mandarins for their faith, and condemned F. Schall, but granted him a reprieve; during which he died. The young emperor Camhi coming of age, put a stop to the persecution, and employed F. Verbiest, a Jesuit, to publish the yearly Chinese calendar, declared him president of the mathematics in his palace, and consequently a Mandarin. The first year he opened the Christian churches, which was in 1671, above twenty thousand souls were baptized: and in the year following an uncle of the emperor, one of

the eight perpetual generals of the Tartar troops, and several other persons of distinction. The succeeding emperors were no less favourable to the Christians, and permitted them to build a most sumptuous church within the enclosure of their own palace, which in many respects surpassed all the other buildings of the empire. It was finished in 1702. The Dominican friars, according to Touron, (Hommes Illustr. t. 6.) entered China in 1556, converted many to the faith, and, in 1631, laid the foundation of the most numerous church of Fokieu, great part of which province they converted to the faith. Four priests of this Order received the crown of martyrdom in 1647, and a fifth, named Francis de Capillas, from the convent of Valladolid, the apostle of the town of Fogan, was cruelly beaten, and soon after beheaded on the 15th of January, 1648, "because, as his sentence imported, he contemned the spirits and gods of the country." Relations hereof were transmitted to the Congregation de Propagandâ Fide, under pope Urban VIII.

Upwards of a hundred thousand souls zealously professed the faith, and they had above two hundred churches. But a debate arose whether certain honours paid by the Chinese to Confucius and their deceased ancestors, with certain oblations made either solemnly by the mandarins and doctors at the equinoxes, and at the new and full moons, or privately in their own houses or temples, were superstitious and idolatrous. Pope Clement XI. in 1704, condemned those rites as superstitious, *utpote superstitione imbutos*, the execution of which decree he committed to the patriarch of Antioch, afterward cardinal Tournon, whom he sent as his commissary into that kingdom. Benedict XIV. confirmed the same more amply and severely by his constitution, *ex quo singulari*, in 1742, in which he declares, that the faithful ought to express God in the Chinese language by the name Thien Chu, *i. e.* the Lord of heaven: and that the words Tien, the heeaven, and Xang Ti, the Supreme Ruler, are not to be used, because they signify the supreme god of the idolaters, a kind of fifth essence, or intelligent nature in the heaven itself: that the inscription, King Tien, worship thou the heaven, cannot be allowed. The obedience of those who had formerly defended these rites to be merely political and civil honours, not sacred, was such, that from that time they have taken every occasion of testifying it to the world. By a like submission and victory over himself, Fenelon was truly greater than by all his other illustrious virtues and actions.

The emperor Kang-hi protected the Christian religion, in the most favourable manner. Whereas his successor, Yongtching, banished the missionaries out of the chief cities, but kept those Religious in his palace who were employed by him in painting, mathematics, and other liberal arts, and who continued mandarins of the court. Kienlong, the next emperor, carried the persecution to the greatest rigours of cruelty. The tragedy was begun by the viceroy of Fokieu, who stirred up the emperor himself. A great number of Christians of all ages and sexes were banished, beaten, and tortured divers ways, especially by being buffeted on the face with a terrible kind of armed ferula, one blow of which would knock the teeth out, and make the head swell exceedingly. All which torments even the young converts bore with incredible constancy, rather than discover where the priest lay hid, or deliver up the crosses, relics, or sacred books, or do any thing contrary to the law of God. Many priests and others died of their torments, or of the hardships of their dungeons. One bishop and six priests received the crown of martyrdom. Peter Martyr Sanz, a Spanish Dominican friar, arrived in China in 1715, where he had laboured fifteen years when he was named by the congregation bishop of Mauricastre, and ordained by the bishop of Nanquin, assisted by the bishops of Pekin and Macao, and appointed Apostolic Vicar for the province of Fokieu. In 1732, the emperor by an edict banished all the missionaries. Peter Sanz retired to Macao, but returned to Fokieu, in 1738, and founded several new churches for his numerous converts, and received the vows of several virgins who consecrated themselves to God. The viceroy provoked at this, caused him to be apprehended amidst the tears of his dear flock, with four Dominican friars, his fellow-labourers. They were beaten with clubs, buffeted on the face with gauntlets made of several pieces of leather, and at length condemned to lose their heads. The bishop was beheaded on the same day, the 26th of May, 1747. The Chinese superstitiously imagine, that the soul of one that is put to death seizes the first person it meets, and therefore all the spectators run away as soon as they see the stroke of death given; but none of them did so at the death of this blessed martyr. On the contrary, admiring the joy with which he died, and esteeming his holy soul happy, they thought it a blessing to come the nearest to him, and to touch his blood; which they did as respectfully as Christians could have done, for whom a pagan gathered the blood, because they durst not appear. The other four Dominican friars

who were also Spaniards, suffered much during twenty-eight months' cruel imprisonment, and were strangled privately in their dungeons on the 28th of October, 1748. Pope Benedict XIV. made a discourse to the cardinals on the precious death of this holy bishop, September 16, 1748. See Touron, t. 6. p 729.

These four fellow-martyrs of the Order of St. Dominick were, Francis Serranus, fifty-two years old, who had laboured nineteen years in the Chinese mission, and during his last imprisonment was nominated by pope Benedict XIV. bishop of Tipasa; Joachim Roio, fifty-six years old, who had preached in that empire thirty three years; John Alcober, forty-two years old, who had spent eighteen years in that mission; and Francis Diaz, thirty-three years old, of which he had employed nine in the same vineyard. During their imprisonment, a report that their lives would be spared, filled them not with joy, but with grief, to the great admiration of the infidels, as Pope Benedict XIV. mentions in his discourse to the consistory of cardinals, on their death, delivered in 1752: in which he qualifies them crowned, but not declared martyrs: *martyres consummatos, nondum martures vindicatos.* In the same persecution two Jesuits, F. Joseph of Attemis, an Italian, and F. Antony Joseph Henriquez, a Portuguese, were apprehended in December 1747 and tortured several times to compel them to renounce their religion. They were at length condemned to death by the mandarins, and the sentence, according to custom, being sent to the emperor, was confirmed by him, and the two priests were strangled in prison on the 12th of September, 1748. On these martyrs see F. Touron, Hommes, Illustres de l'Ordre de S. Domin. t. 6. and the letters of the Jesuit missionaries. On the history of China, F. Du Halde's Description of China, in four vols. fol. Mullerus de Chataiâ Navarrete, Tratados Históricos de la China, an. 1676. Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses des Missionaires, vol 27, 28. Jackson's Chronology, &c.

In Tonquin, a kingdom south-west of China, in which the king and mandarins follow the Chinese religion, though various sects of idolatry and superstition reign among the people, a persecution was raised against the Christians in 1713. In this storm one hundred and fifty churches were demolished, many converts were beaten with a hammer on their knees, and tortured various other ways, and two Spanish missionary priests of the order of St Dominick, suffered martyrdom for the faith, F. Francis Gil de Federich, and F. Matthew Alfonso Leziniana. F. Gil arrived there in 1735, and found above twenty thousand Christians

in the west of the kingdom, who had been baptized by priests of his order. This vineyard he began assiduously to cultivate; but was apprehended by a neighbouring Bonza, in 1737, and condemned to die the year following. The Tonquinese usually execute condemned persons only in the last moon of the year, and a rejoicing or other accidents often cause much longer delays. The confessor was often allowed the liberty of saying mass in the prison; and was pressed to save his life, by saying that he came into Tonquin as a merchant; but this would have been a lie, and he would not suffer any other to give in such an answer for him. Father Matthew, a priest of the same order, after having preached ten years in Tonquin, was seized while he was saying mass; and because he refused to trample on a crucifix, was condemned to die in 1743; and in May, 1744, was brought into the same prison with F. Gil. The idolaters were so astonished to see their ardour to die, and the sorrow of the latter upon an offer of his life, that they cried out, "Others desire to live, but these men to die." They were both beheaded together on the 22d of January, 1744. See Touron, t. 6. and Lettres Edif. et Curieuses des Missionaires.

Many other vast countries, both in the eastern and western parts of the world, received the light of the gospel in the sixteenth century: in which great work several apostolic men were raised by God, and some were honoured with the crown of martyrdom. Among the zealous missionaries who converted to the faith the savage inhabitants of Brazil in America, of which the Portuguese took possession in 1500, under king John II., F. Joseph Anchieta is highly celebrated. He was a native of the Canary islands, but took the Jesuit's habit at Coimbra; died in Brazil, on the 9th of June, 1597, of his age sixty-four; having laboured in cultivating that vineyard forty-seven years. He was a man of apostolic humility, patience, meekness, prayer, zeal, and charity. The fruit of his labours was not less wonderful than the example of his virtues. See his life by F. Peter Roterigius, and by F. Sebastian Beretarius. The sanctity of the venerable F. Peter Claver, who laboured in the same vineyard, was so heroic, that a process has been commenced for his canonization.

F. Peter Claver was nobly born in Catalonia, and entered himself in the Society at Tarragon, in 1602, when about twenty years old. From his infancy he looked upon nothing small in which the service of God was concerned; for the least action or circumstance which is referred to his honour is great and precious, and requires our utmost appli-

cation: in this spirit of fervour he considered God in every neighbour and superior; and upon motives of religion was humble and meek towards all, and ever ready to obey and serve every one. From the time of his religious profession, he applied himself with the greatest ardour to seek nothing in this world, but what Jesus Christ sought in his mortal life, that is, the kingdom of his grace: for the only aim of this servant of God was, the sanctification of his own soul, and the salvation of others. He was thoroughly instructed that a man's spiritual progress depends very much upon the fervour of his beginning; and he omitted nothing both to lay a solid foundation, and continually to raise upon it the structure of all virtues; and he sought and found God in all things. The progress which he made was very great, because he set out by the most perfect exterior and interior renunciation of the world and himself. Being sent to Majorca to study philosophy and divinity, he contracted a particular friendship with a lay-brother, Alphonsus Rodriguez, then porter of the college, an eminent contemplative, and perfect servant of God: nor is it to be expressed how much the fervent disciple improved himself in the school of this humble master, in the maxims of Christian perfection. His first lessons were, to speak little with men, and much with God; to direct every action in the beginning with great fervour to the most perfect glory of God, in union with the holy actions of Christ: to have God always present in his heart; and to pray continually for the grace never to offend God: never to speak of any thing that belongs to clothing, lodging, and such conveniences, especially eating or drinking; to meditate often on the sufferings of Christ, and on the virtues of his calling. F. Claver, in 1610, was, at his earnest request, sent with other missionaries to preach the faith to the infidels at Carthagena, and the neighbouring country in America. At the first sight of the poor Negro slaves, he was moved with the strongest sentiments of compassion, tenderness, and zeal, which never forsook him, and it was his constant study to afford them all the temporal comfort and assistance in his power. In the first place he was indefatigable in instructing and baptizing them, and in giving them every spiritual succour: the title in which he gloried was that of the Slave of the Slaves, or of the Negroes; and incredible were the fatigues which he underwent night and day with them, and the many heroic acts of all virtues, which he exercised in serving them. The Mahometans, the Pagans, and the very Catholics, whose scandalous lives were a reproach to their holy religion; the hospitals and the prisons were other

theatres where he exercised his zeal. The history of his life furnishes us with most edifying instances, and gives an account of two persons raised to life by him, and of other miracles; though his assiduous prayer, and his extraordinary humility, mortification of his senses, and perfect self-denial, might be called the greatest of his miracles. In the same rank we may place the wonderful conversions of many obstinate sinners, and the heroic sanctity of many great servants of God, who were by him formed to perfect virtue. Among his maxims of humility he used especially to inculcate, that he who is sincerely humble desires to be contemned, he seeks not to appear humble, but worthy to be humbled, is subject to all in his heart and ready to obey the whole world. By the holy hatred of ourselves, we must secretly rejoice in our hearts when we meet with contempt and affronts; but must take care, said this holy man, that no one think we rejoice at them, but rather believe that we are confounded and grieved at the ill treatment which we receive. F. Claver died on the 8th of September, 1654, being about seventy-two years old; having spent in the Society fifty-five years in the same uniform crucified life, and in the constant round of the same uninterrupted labours, which perhaps requires a courage more heroic than martyrdom. In the process for his canonization, the scrutiny relating to his life and virtues is happily finished; and Benedict XIV. confirmed the decree of the Congregation of Rites, in 1747, by which it is declared, that the proofs of the heroic degree of the Christian virtues which he practised, are competent and sufficient. See his life by F Fleuriau.

Many martyrs in Pontus, under Dioclesian. Some were tortured with melted lead poured upon them; others with sharp reeds thrust under their nails, and such like inventions, several times repeated: at length they various ways completed their martyrdom. See Eusebius, Hist. l. 8. c. 12. p. 306.

ST. AVITUS, ARCHBISHOP OF VIENNE, C.

St. Alcimus Ecditius Avitus was of a senatorian Roman family, but born in Auvergne. His

father Isychius was chosen archbishop of Vienne upon the death of St. Mammertus, and was succeeded in that dignity by our saint, in 490. Ennodius, in his life of St. Epiphanius of Pavia, says of him, that he was a treasure of learning and piety; and adds, that when the Burgundians had crossed the Alps, and carried home many captives out of Liguria, this holy prelate ransomed a great number. Clovis, king of France, whilst yet a pagan, and Gondebald, king of Burgundy, though an Arian, held him in great veneration. This latter, for fear of giving offence to his subjects, durst not embrace the Catholic faith, yet gave sufficient proofs that he was convinced of the truth by our saint, who in a public conference, reduced the Arian bishops to silence in his presence, at Lyons. Gondebald died in 516. His son and successor, Sigismund, was brought over by St. Avitus to the Catholic faith. In 517, our saint presided in the famous council of Epaone, (now called Yenne,) upon the Rhone, in which forty canons of discipline were framed. When king Sigismund had imbrued his hands in the blood of his son Sigeric, upon a false charge brought against him by a step-mother, St. Avitus inspired him with so great a horror of his crime, that he rebuilt the abbey of Agaunum, or St. Maurice, became a monk, and died a saint. Most of the works of St. Avitus are lost: we have yet his poem on the praises of virginity, to his sister Fuscina, a nun, and some others; several epistles; two homilies on the Rogation days; and a third on the same, lately published by Dom Martenne;[1] fragments of eight other homilies; his conference against the Arians is given us in the Spicilege.[2] St. Avitus died in 525, and is commemorated in the Roman martyrology on the 5th of February; and in the collegiate church of our Lady at

1 Martenne Thesaur. Anecdot. t. 5. p. 49. 2 Spicil. t. 5.

Vienne, where he was buried, on the 20th of August. Ennodius, and other writers of that age, extol his learning, his extensive charity to the poor, and his other virtues. See St. Gregory of Tours, Hist. l. 2.[1]

ST. ALICE, OR ADELAIDE, V., ABBESS.

She was daughter of Megendose, count of Guelders, and governed the nunnery of Bellich on the Rhine, near Bonn, (now a church of canonesses,) but died in 1015, abbess of our Lady's, in Cologne, both monasteries having been founded by her father. Her festival, with an octave, is kept at Bellich, or Vilich, where the nunnery which she instituted, of the order of St. Bennet, is now converted into a church of canonesses. See her life in Surius and Bollandus.

ST. ABRAAMIUS, BISHOP of ARBELA, M.

This city, after the fall of Nineve, was long the capital of Adiabene, in Assyria, and was one bishopric with Hazza, anciently called Adiab. Arbela, now called Irbil, was famous for the victory of Alexander; but received far greater lustre from the martyrdom of St. Abraamius, its bishop, who sealed his faith with his blood, after having suffered horrible torments, which were inflicted by order of an arch-magian, in the fifth year of king Sapor's persecution, that is, of Christ, 348. See Sozomen.

1 F. Sirmond published the works of St. Avitus, with judicious short notes, in 8vo. 1643. See them in Sirmond's works, t. 2. and Bibl. Patr. His close manner of confuting the Arians in some of his letters, makes us regret the loss of many other works, which he wrote against them.

FEBRUARY VI.

ST. DOROTHY, VIRGIN AND MARTYR.

See S. Aldhelm, Ado, Usuard, &c. in Bollandus, p. 771.

St. Aldhelm relates from her acts,[1] that Fabritius, the governor of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, inflicted on her most cruel torments, because she refused to marry, or to adore idols; that she converted two apostate women sent to seduce her; and that being condemned to be beheaded, she converted one Theophilus, by sending him certain fruits and flowers miraculously obtained of her heavenly spouse. She seems to have suffered under Dioclesian. Her body is kept in the celebrated church which bears her name, beyond the Tiber, in Rome. She is mentioned on this day in the ancient Martyrology, under the name of St. Jerom. There was another holy virgin, whom Rufin calls Dorothy, a rich and noble lady of the city of Alexandria, who suffered torments and a voluntary banishment, to preserve her faith and chastity against the brutish lust and tyranny of the emperor Maximinus, in the year 308, as is recorded by Eusebius,[2] and Rufinus;[3] but many take this latter, whose name is not mentioned by Eusebius, to be the famous St. Catharine of Alexandria.

The blood of the martyrs flourished in its hundred-fold increase, as St. Justin has well observed: "We are slain with the sword, but we increase and multiply: the more we are persecuted and destroyed, the more are added to our numbers. As a vine, by being pruned and cut close, shoots forth new suckers, and bears a greater abundance of fruit; so is it with us."[4] Among

1 L. de Laud. Virgin. c. 25.
2 L. 8. c. 14. 3 L. 1. c. 17. 4 Apol. 2. ol. 1.

other false reflections, the baron of Montesquieu, an author too much admired by many, writes:[1] "It is hardly possible that Christianity should ever be established in China. Vows of virginity, the assembling of women in the churches, their necessary intercourse with the ministers of religion, their participation of the sacraments, auricular confession, the marrying but one wife; all this oversets the manners and customs, and strikes at the religion and laws of the country." Could he forget that the gospel overcame all these impediments where it was first established, in spite of the most inveterate prejudices, and of all worldly opposition from the great and the learned; whereas philosophy, though patronized by princes, could never in any age introduce its rules even into one city. In vain did the philosopher Plotinus solicit the emperor Gallienus to rebuild a ruined city in Campania, that he and his disciples might establish in it the republic of Plato: a system, in some points, flattering the passions of men, almost as Mahometism fell in with the prejudices and passions of the nations where it prevails. So visibly is the church the work of God.

ST. VEDAST, BISHOP OF ARRAS, C.

From a very short life of his, written soon after his death, and another longer, corrected by Alcuin, both published by Henschenius.

A. D. 539.

St. Vedast left his own country very young, (which seems to have been in the west of France,) and led a holy life concealed from the world in the diocess of Toul, where the bishop, charmed with his virtue, promoted him to the priesthood. Clovis I., king of France, returning from his victory over the Alemanni, hastening to Rheims to

1 L'Esprit des Loix, b. xix. 13.

receive baptism, desired at Toul some priest who might instruct and prepare him for that holy sacrament on the road. Vedast was presented to his majesty for this purpose. Whilst he accompanied the king at the passage of the river Aisne, a blind man begging on the bridge besought the servant of God to restore him to his sight: the saint, divinely inspired, prayed, and made the sign of the cross on his eyes, and he immediately recovered it. The miracle confirmed the king in the faith, and moved several of his courtiers to embrace it. St. Vedast assisted St. Remigius in converting the French, till that prelate consecrated him bishop of Arras, that he might re-establish the faith in that country. As he was entering that city in 499, he restored sight to a blind man, and cured one that was lame. These miracles excited the attention, and disposed the hearts of many infidels to a favourable reception of the gospel, which had been received here when the Romans were masters of the country: but the ravages of the Vandals and the Alans having either dispersed or destroyed the Christians, Vedast could not discover the least footsteps of Christianity, save only in the memory of some old people, who showed him without the walls a poor ruinous church, where Christians used to hold their religious assemblies. He sighed to see the Lord's field so overgrown with bushes and brambles, and become the haunts of wild beasts; whereupon he made it his most earnest supplication to God, that he would in his mercy vouchsafe to restore his worship in that country. A national faith is so great a blessing, that we seldom find it granted a second time to those, who, by imitating the ingratitude of the Jews, have drawn upon themselves the like terrible chastisement. St. Vedast found the infidels stupid and obstinate; yet persevered, till, by his patience, meekness, charity, and prayers, he

triumphed over bigoted superstition and lust, and planted throughout that country the faith and holy maxims of Christ. The great diocess of Cambray, which was extended beyond Brussels, was also committed to the care of this holy pastor, by St. Remigius, in 510, and the two sees remained a long time united. St. Vedast continued his labours almost forty years, and left his church flourishing in sanctity at his decease, on the 6th of February, in 539.

He was buried in the cathedral which is dedicated to God, under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin; but a hundred and twenty-eight years after, St. Aubertus, the seventh bishop, changed a little chapel which St. Vedast had built in honour of St. Peter, without the walls, into an Abbey, and removed the relics of St. Vedast into this new church, leaving a small portion of them in the cathedral. This great abbey of St. Vedast was finished by St. Vindicianus, successor to St. Aubertus, and most munificently endowed by king Theodoric or Thierry, who lies buried in the church with his wife Doda. Our ancestors had a particular devotion to St. Vedast, whom they called St. Foster, whence descends the family name of Foster, as Camden takes notice in his remains. Alcuin has left us a standing monument of his extraordinary devotion to St. Vedast, not only by writing his life, but also by compiling an office and mass in his honour, for the use of his monastery at Arras, and by a letter to the monks of that house, in 769, in which he calls this saint his protector. See this letter in Martenne, Ampliss. Collect. t. 1. p. 50.

SAINT AMANDUS, B. C.

He was born near Nantes, of pious parents, lords of that territory. At twenty years of age, he retired into a small monastery in the little isle of Oye, near that of Rhé. He had not been there above a year, when his father found him out, and made use of every persuasive argument in his power to prevail with him to quit that state of life. To his threats of disinheriting him, the saint cheerfully answered, "Christ is my only inheritance." The saint went to Tours, and a year after to Bourges, where he lived near fifteen years under the direction of St. Austregisilus, the bishop, in a cell near the cathedral. His clothing was a single sack-cloth, and his sustenance

barley-bread and water. After a pilgrimage to Rome, he was ordained in France a missionary bishop, without any fixed see, in 628, and commissioned to preach the faith to infidels. He preached the gospel in Flanders, and among the Sclavi in Carinthia and other provinces near the Danube:[1] but being banished by king Dagobert, whom he had boldly reproved for his scandalous crimes, he preached to the pagans of Gascony and Navarre. Dagobert soon recalled him, threw himself at his feet to beg his pardon, and caused him to baptize his new-born son, Saint Sigebert, afterward king. The idolatrous people about Ghent were so savage, that no preacher durst venture himself among them. This moved the saint to choose that mission; during the course of which he was often beaten, and sometimes thrown into the river: he continued preaching, though for a long time he saw no fruit, and supported himself by his labour. The miracle of his raising a dead man to life, at last opened the eyes of the barbarians, and the country came in crowds to receive baptism, destroying the temples of their idols with their own hands. In 633, the saint having built them several churches, founded two great monasteries in Ghent, both under the patronage of St. Peter; one was named Blandinberg, from the hill Blandin, on which it stands, now the rich abbey of St. Peter's; the other took the name of St. Bavo, from him who gave his estate for its foundation; this became the cathedral in 1559, when the city was created a bishop's see. Besides many pious foundations, both in France and Flanders, in 639, he built the great abbey three leagues from Tournay, called Elnon, from the river on which it stands; but it has long since taken the name of St. Amand, with its town and warm mineral baths. In 649

1 See Henschenius, p. 828.

he was chosen bishop of Maestricht; but three years after he resigned that see to St. Remaclus, and returned to his missions, to which his compassion for the blindness of infidels always inclined his heart. He continued his labours among them till the age of eighty-six, when, broken with infirmities, he retired to Elnon, which house he governed as abbot four years more, spending that time in preparing his soul for his passage to eternity, which happened in 675. His body is honourably kept in that abbey. The Sarum Breviary honoured St. Amandus and St. Vedast with an office of nine lessons. See Buzelin.

ST. BARSANUPHIUS, ANCHORET.

Having renounced the world, he passed some years in the monastery of St. Seridon, near Gaza in Palestine, in the happy company of that holy abbot, John the prophet, the blessed Dorotheus, and St. Dositheus. That he might live in the constant exercise of heavenly contemplation, the sweetness of which he had begun to relish, he left the monastery about the year 540, and in a remote cell, led a life rather angelical than human. He wrote a treatise against the Origenist monks, which Montfaucon has published in his Bibl. Coislin.

The Greeks held this saint in so great veneration, that his picture was placed in the sanctuary of the church of Sancta Sophia in Constantinople, with those of St. Antony and St. Ephrem, as we are informed by the Studite monk who wrote the preface to the Instructions of St. Dorotheus, translated into French by abbot Rancé of la Trappe. The relics of St. Barsanuphius were brought in the ninth century to Oria, near Siponto in Italy, where he is honoured as principal patron, on the 7th of February. The Greek Synaxaries have his office on the 6th of this month. Baronius placed his name in the Roman Martyrology on the 11th of April. See on him Evagrius.

FEBRUARY VII.

ST. ROMUALD, ABBOT, C.

FOUNDER OF THE ORDER OF CAMALDOLI.

From his life, written by St. Peter Damian fifteen years after his death.

A. D. 1027.

St. Romuald, of the family of the dukes of Ravenna, called Honesti, was born in that capital about the year 956. Being brought up in the maxims of the world, in softness and the love of pleasures, he grew every day more and more enslaved to his passions; yet he often made a resolution of undertaking something remarkable for the honour of God; and when he went a hunting, if he found an agreeable solitary place in the woods, he would stop in it to pray, and would cry out, "How happy were the ancient hermits, who had such habitations! With what tranquillity could they serve God, free from the tumult of the world!" His father, whose name was Sergius, a worldly man, agreed to decide a dispute he had with a relation about an estate by duel. Romuald was shocked at the criminal design; but by threats of being disinherited if he refused, was engaged by his father to be present as a spectator: Sergius slew his adversary. Romuald, then twenty years of age, struck with horror at the crime that had been perpretrated, though he had concurred to it no farther than by his presence, thought himself, however, obliged to expiate it by a severe course of penance for forty days in the neighbouring Benedictine monastery of Classis, within four miles of Ravenna. He performed great austerities, and prayed and wept almost without intermission. His compunction and fervour made all these exercises seem easy and sweet to him; and the young

nobleman became every day more and more penetrated with the fear and love of God. The good example which he saw, and the discourses of a pious lay-brother, who waited on him, concerning eternity and the contempt of the world, wrought so powerfully upon him, that he petitioned in full chapter to be admitted as a penitent to the religious habit. After some demurs, through their apprehensions of his father's resentment, whose next heir the saint was, his request was granted. He passed seven years in this house in so great fervour and austerity, that his example became odious to certain tepid monks, who could not bear such a continual reproach of their sloth. They were more exasperated when his fervour prompted him to reprove their conduct, insomuch that some of the most abandoned formed a design upon his life, the execution of which he prevented by leaving that monastery with the abbot's consent, and retiring into the neighbourhood of Venice, where he put himself under the direction of Marinus, a holy hermit, who there led an austere ascetic life. Under this master, Romuald made great progress in every virtue belonging to a religious state of life.

Peter Urseoli was then doge of Venice. He had been unjustly raised to that dignity two years before by a faction which had assassinated his predecessor Peter Candiano; in which conspiracy he is said by some to have been an accomplice: though this is denied by the best Venetian historians.[1] This murder, however,

1 Sanuti tells us, that St. Peter Urseoli, from his cradle, devoted himself with his whole heart to the divine service, and proposed to himself in all his actions the holy will and the greater glory of God. He built in the church of St. Mark a chapel, in which the body of that evangelist was secretly laid, the place being known by very few. Being chosen doge, he refused that dignity for a long time with great obstinacy, but at length suffered himself to be overcome by the importunity of the people. He had held it only two years and eight months, when he retired. Sanuti, Vite de Duchi di Venezia, c. 976. Muratori, Rerum Italicar. Scriptores, t. 22. p. 564.

paved the way for his advancement to the sovereignty, which the stings of his conscience would not suffer him quietly to enjoy. This put him upon consulting St. Guarinus, a holy abbot of Catalonia, then at Venice, about what he was to do to be saved. The advice of St. Marinus and St. Romuald was also desired. These three unanimously agreed in proposing a monastic state, as affording the best opportunities for expiating his crimes. Urseoli acquiesced, and, under pretence of joining with his family at their villa, where he had ordered a great entertainment, set out privately with St. Guarinus, St. Romuald, and John Gradenigo, a Venetian nobleman of singular piety, and his son-in-law John Moresini, for Saint Guarinus's monastery of St. Michael of Cusan, in that part of Catalonia which was then subject to France. Here Urseoli and Gradenigo made their monastic profession: Marinus and Romuald, leaving them under the conduct of Guarinus, retired into a desert near Cusan, and there led an eremetical life. Many flocked to them and Romuald being made superior, first practised himself what he taught others, joining rigorous fasts, solitude, and continual prayer, with hard manual labour. He had an extraordinary ardour for prayer, which he exceedingly recommended to his disciples, in whom he could not bear to see the least sloth or tepidity with regard to the discharge of this duty; saying, they had better recite one psalm with fervour, than a hundred with less devotion. His own fasts and mortifications were extremely rigorous, but he was more indulgent to others, and in particular to Urseoli, who had exchanged his monastery for St. Romuald's desert, where he lived under his conduct; who, persevering in his penitential state, made a most holy end, and is honoured in Venice as a saint, with an office, on the 14th of January: and in the Roman Mar-

tyrology, published by Benedict XIV., on the 10th of that month.

Romuald, in the beginning of his conversion and retreat from the world, was molested with various temptations. The devil sometimes directly solicited him to vice; at other times he represented to him what he had forsaken, and that he had left it to ungrateful relations. He would sometimes suggest that what he did could not be agreeable to God; at other times, that his labours and difficulties were too heavy for man to bear. These and the like attempts of the devil he defeated by watching and prayer, in which he passed the whole night; and the devil strove in vain to divert him from this holy exercise by shaking his whole cell, and threatening to bury him in the ruins. Five years of grievous interior conflicts and buffetings of the enemy, wrought in him a great purity of heart, and prepared him for most extraordinary heavenly communications. The conversion of count Oliver, or Oliban, lord of that territory, added to his spiritual joy. That count, from a voluptuous worldling, and profligate liver, became a sincere penitent, and embraced the order of St. Benedict. He carried great treasures with him to mount Cassino, but left his estate to his son. The example of Romauld had also such an influence on Sergius, his father, that, to make atonement for his past sins and enormities, he had entered the monastery of St. Severus, near Ravenna; but after some time spent there, he yielded so far to the devil's temptations, as to meditate a return into the world. This was a sore affliction to our saint, and determined him to return to Italy, to dissuade his father from leaving his monastery. But the inhabitants of the country where he lived, had such an opinion of his sanctity, that they were resolved not to let him go. They therefore formed a brutish extravagant design to kill him, that they might keep at

least his body among them, imagining it would be their protection and safeguard on perilous occasions. The saint being informed of their design, had recourse to David's stratagem, and feigned himself mad. Upon which the people, losing their high opinion of him, guarded him no longer. Being thus at liberty to execute his design, he set out on his journey to Ravenna, through the south of France. He arrived there in 994, and made use of all the authority his superiority in religion gave him over his father; and by his exhortations, tears, and prayers, brought him to such an extraordinary degree of compunction and sorrow, as to prevail with him to lay aside all thoughts of leaving his monastery, where he spent the remainder of his days in great fervour, and died with the reputation of sanctity.

Romuald, having acquitted himself of his duty towards his father, retired into the marsh of Classis, and lived in a cell, remote from all mankind. The devil pursued him here with his former malice; he sometimes overwhelmed his imagination with melancholy, and once scourged him cruelly in his cell. Romuald at length cried out, "Sweetest Jesus, dearest Jesus, why hast thou forsaken me? hast thou entirely delivered me over to my enemies?" At that sweet name the wicked spirits betook themselves to flight, and such an excess of divine sweetness and compunction filled the breast of Romuald, that he melted into tears, and his heart seemed quite dissolved. He sometimes insulted his spiritual enemies, and cried out, "Are all your forces spent? have you no more engines against a poor despicable servant of God?" Not long after, the monks of Classis chose Romuald for their abbot. The emperor Otho III., who was then at Ravenna, made use of his authority to engage the saint to accept the charge, and went in person to visit him in his cell, where he passed the night lying

on the saint's poor bed. But nothing could make Romuald consent, till a synod of bishops then assembled at Ravenna, compelled him to it by threats of excommunication. The saint's inflexible zeal for the punctual observance of monastic discipline, soon made these monks repent of their choice, which they manifested by their irregular and mutinous behaviour. The saint being of a mild disposition, bore with it for some time, in hopes of bringing them to a right sense of their duty. At length, finding all his endeavours to reform them ineffectual, he came to a resolution of leaving them, and went to the emperor, then besieging Tivoli, to acquaint him of it; whom, when he could not prevail upon to accept of his resignation, the saint, in the presence of the archbishop of Ravenna, threw down his crosier at his feet. This interview proved very happy for Tivoli; for the emperor, though he had condemned that city to plunder, the inhabitants having rebelled and killed duke Matholin, their governor, spared it at the intercession of St. Romuald. Otho having also contrary to his solemn promise upon oath, put one Crescentius, a Roman senator, to death, who had been the leader in the rebellion of Tivoli, and made his widow his concubine; he not only performed a severe public penance enjoined him by the saint, as his confessor, but promised, by St. Romuald's advice, to abdicate his crown and retire into a convent during life; but this he did not live to perform. The saint's remonstrances had a like salutary effect on Thamn, the emperor's favourite, prime minister and accomplice in the treachery before mentioned, who, with several other courtiers, received the religious habit at the hands of St. Romuald, and spent the remainder of his days in retirement and penance. It was a very edifying sight to behold several young princes and noblemen, who a little before had been remarkable for their

splendid appearance and sumptuous living, now leading an obscure, solitary, penitential life in humility, penance, fasting, cold, and labour. They prayed, sung psalms, and worked. They all had their several employments: some spun, others knit, others tilled the ground, gaining their poor livelihood by the sweat of their brow. St. Boniface surpassed all the rest in fervour and mortification. He was the emperor's near relation, and so dear to him, that he never called him by any other name than, My soul! He excelled in music, and in all the liberal arts and sciences, and after having spent many years under the discipline of St. Romuald, was ordained bishop, and commissioned by the pope to preach to the infidels of Russia, whose king he converted by his miracles, but was beheaded by the king's brothers, who were themselves afterward converted on seeing the miracles wrought on occasion of the martyr's death. Several other monks of St. Romuald's monastery met with the same cruel treatment in Sclavonia, whither they were sent by the pope to preach the gospel.

St. Romuald built many other monasteries, and continued three years at one he founded near Parenzo, one year in the community to settle it, and two in a neighbouring cell. Here he laboured some time under a spiritual dryness, not being able to shed one tear; but he ceased not to continue his devotions with greater fervour. At last being in his cell, at those words of the psalmist, *I will give thee understanding, and will instruct thee*, he was suddenly visited by God with an extraordinary light and spirit of compunction, which from that time never left him. By a supernatural light, the fruit of prayer, he understood the holy scriptures, and wrote an exposition of the psalms full of admirable unction. He often foretold things to come, and gave directions full of heavenly wisdom to all who came to consult him,

especially to his religious, who frequently came to ask his advice how to advance in virtue, and how to resist temptations; he always sent them back to their cells full of an extraordinary cheerfulness. Through his continual weeping he thought others had a like gift, and often said to his monks, "Do not weep too much; for it prejudices the sight and the head." It was his desire, whenever he could conveniently avoid it, not to say mass before a number of people, because he could not refrain from tears in offering that august sacrifice. The contemplation of the Divinity often transported him out of himself; melting in tears, and burning with love, he would cry out, "Dear Jesus! my dear Jesus! my unspeakable desire! my joy! joy of the angels! sweetness of the saints! and the like, which he was heard to speak with a jubilation which cannot be expressed. To propagate the honour of God, he resolved, by the advice of the bishop of Pola and others, to exchange his remote desert, for one where he could better advance his holy institute. The bishop of Parenzo forbade any boat to carry him off, desiring earnestly to detain him; but the bishop of Pola sent one to fetch him. He miraculously calmed a storm at sea, and landed safe at Capreola. Coming to Bifurcum, he found the monks' cells too magnificent, and would lodge in none but that of one Peter, a man of extraordinary austerity, who never would live in a cell larger than four cubits. This Peter admired the saint's spirit of compunction, and said that when he recited the psalms alternately with him, the holy man used to go out thirty times in a night as if for some necessity, but he saw it was to abandon himself a few moments to spiritual consolation, with which he overflowed at prayer, or to sighs and tears which he was not able to contain. Romuald sent to the counts of the province of Marino, to beg a little ground whereon to build a

monastery. They hearing Romuald's name, offered him with joy whatever mountains, woods, or fields, he would choose among them. He found the valley of Castro most proper. Exceeding great was the fruit of the blessed man's endeavours, and many put themselves with great fervour under his direction. Sinners, who did not forsake the world entirely, were by him in great multitudes moved to penance, and to distribute great part of their possessions liberally among the poor. The holy man seemed in the midst of them as a seraph incarnate, burning with heavenly ardours of divine love, and inflaming those who heard him speak. If he travelled, he rode or walked at a distance behind his brethren, reciting psalms, and watering his cheeks almost without ceasing with tears that flowed in great abundance.

The saint had always burnt with an ardent desire of martyrdom, which was much increased by the glorious crowns of some of his disciples, especially of St. Boniface. At last, not able to contain the ardour of his charity and desire to give his life for his Redeemer, he obtained the pope's license, and set out to preach the gospel in Hungary, in which mission some of his disciples accompanied him. He had procured two of them to be consecrated archbishops by the pope, declining himself the episcopal dignity; but a violent illness which seized him on his entering Hungary, and returned as often as he attempted to proceed on his intended design, was a plain indication of the will of God in this matter; so he returned home with seven of his associates. The rest, with the two archbishops, went forward, and preached the faith under the holy king, St. Stephen, suffering much for Christ, but none obtained the crown of martyrdom. Romuald in his return built some monasteries in Germany, and laboured to reform others; but this drew on him

many persecutions. Yet all, even the great ones of the world, trembled in his presence. He refused to accept either water or wood, without paying for it, from Raynerius, marquis of Tuscia, because that prince had married the wife of a relation whom he had killed. Raynerius though a sovereign, used to say, that neither the emperor nor any mortal on earth could strike him with so much awe as Romuald's presence did. So powerful was the impression which the Holy Ghost, dwelling in his breast, made on the most haughty sinners. Hearing that a certain Venetian had by simony obtained the abbey of Classis, he hastened thither. The unworthy abbot strove to kill him, to preserve his unjust dignity. He often met with the like plots and assaults from several of his own disciples, which procured him the repeated merit, though not the crown, of martyrdom. The pope having called him to Rome, he wrought there several miracles, built some monasteries, in its neighbourhood, and converted innumerable souls to God. Returning from Rome, he made a long stay at Mount Sitria. A young nobleman addicted to impurity, being exasperated at the saint's severe remonstrances, had the impudence to accuse him of a scandalous crime. The monks by a surprising levity, believed the calumny, enjoined him a most severe penance, forbid him to say mass, and excommunicated him. He bore all with patience and in silence, as if really he had been guilty, and refrained from going to the altar for six months. In the seventh month he was admonished by God to obey no longer so unjust and irregular a sentence pronounced without any authority and without grounds. He accordingly said mass again, and with such raptures of devotion, as obliged him to continue long absorpt in ecstasy. He passed seven years in Sitria, in his cell in strict silence, but his example did the office of his tongue, and

moved many to penance. In his old age, instead of relaxing, he increased his austerities and fasts. He had three hair-shirts which he now and then changed. He never would admit of the least thing to give a savour to the herbs or meal gruel on which he supported himself. If any thing was brought him better dressed, he, for the greater self-denial, applied it to his nostrils, and said, "O gluttony, gluttony, thou shalt never taste this; perpetual war is declared against thee." His disciples also were remarkable for their austere lives, went always barefoot, and looked excessive pale with continual fasting. No other drink was known among them but water, except in sickness. St. Romuald wrought in this place many miraculous cures of the sick. At last, having settled his disciples here in a monastery which he had built for them, he departed for Bifurcum.

The holy emperor St. Henry II. who had succeeded Otho III. coming into Italy, and being desirous to see the saint, sent an honourable embassy to him to induce him to come to court. At the earnest request of his disciples he complied, but not without great reluctance on his side. The emperor received him with the greatest marks of honour and esteem, and rising out of his chair, said to him, "I wish my soul was like yours." The saint observed a strict silence the whole time the interview lasted, to the great astonishment of the court. The emperor being convinced that this did not proceed from pride or disdain, but from humility and a desire of being despised, was so far from being offended at it, that it occasioned his conceiving a higher esteem and veneration for him. The next day he received from him wholesome advice in his closet. The German noblemen showed him the greatest respect as he passed through the court, and plucked the very hairs out of his garments for relics, at which he was so much grieved, that he would have immediately

gone back if he had not been stopped. The emperor gave him a monastery on Mount Amiatus.

The most famous of all his monasteries is that of Camaldoli, near Arezzo, in Tuscany, on the frontiers of the ecclesiastical state, thirty miles east from Florence, founded by him about the year 1009. It lies beyond a mountain, very difficult to pass over, the descent from which on the opposite side is almost a direct precipice looking down upon a pleasant large valley, which then belonged to a lord called Maldoli, who gave it the saint, and from him it retained the name Camaldoli.[1] In this place St. Romuald built a monastery, and by the several observances he added to St. Benedict's rule, gave birth to that new order called Camaldoli, in which he united the cenobitic and eremitical life. After seeing in a vision his monks mounting up a ladder to heaven all in white, he changed their habit from black to white. The hermitage is two short miles distant from the monastery. It is a mountain quite overshaded by a dark wood of fir-trees. In it are seven clear springs of water. The very sight of this solitude in the midst of the forest helps to fill the mind with compunction, and a love of heavenly contemplation. On entering it, we meet with a chapel of St. Antony for travellers to pray in before they advance any further. Next are the cells and lodgings for the porters. Somewhat further, is the church, which is large, well built, and richly adorned. Over the door is a clock, which strikes so loud that it may be heard all over the desert. On the left side of the church is the cell in which St. Romuald lived, when he first established these hermits. Their cells, built of stone, have each a little garden walled round. A constant fire is allowed to be kept in every cell on account of the coldness of the air throughout.

1 Contracted from Campo Maldoli.

the year: each cell has also a chapel in which they may say mass: they call their superior, major. The whole hermitage is now inclosed with a wall: none are allowed to go out of it; but they may walk in the woods and alleys within the inclosure at discretion. Every thing is sent them from the monastery in the valley: their food is every day brought to each cell; and all are supplied with wood and necessaries, that they may have no dissipation or hinderance in their contemplation. Many hours of the day are allotted to particular exercises; and no rain or snow stops any one from meeting in the church to assist at the divine office. They are obliged to strict silence in all public common places; and every where during their Lents, also on Sundays, Holydays, Fridays, and other days of abstinence, and always from Complin till prime the next day.

For a severer solitude, St. Romuald added a third kind of life; that of a recluse. After a holy life in the hermitage, the superior grants leave to any that ask it, and seemed called by God, to live for ever shut up in their cells, never speaking to any one but to the superior when he visits them, and to the brother who brings them necessaries. Their prayers and austerities are doubled, and their fasts more severe and more frequent. St. Romuald condemned himself to this kind of life for several years; and fervent imitators have never since failed in this solitude.

St. Romuald died in his monastery in the valley of Castro in the marquisate of Ancona. As he was born about the year 956, he must have died seventy years and some months old, not a hundred and twenty as the present copies of his life have it. The day of his death was the 19th of June; but his principal feast is appointed by Clement VIII. on the 7th of February, the day of his translation. His body was found entire and uncorrupt five years after his death, and again in

1466. But his tomb being sacrilegiously opened, and his body stolen in 1480, it fell to dust, in which state it was translated to Fabriano, and there deposited in the great church, all but the remains of one arm, sent to Camaldoli. God has honoured his relicts with many miracles. The order of Camaldoli is now divided into five congregations, under so many generals or majors. The life of the hermits is very severe, though something mitigated since the time of St. Romuald. The Cenobites are more like Benedictines, and perhaps were not directly established by St. Romuald, says F. Helyot.

If we are not called to practise the extraordinary austerities of many saints, we cannot but confess that we lie under an indispensable necessity of leading mortified lives, both in order to fulfil our obligation of doing penance, and to subdue our passions and keep our senses and interior faculties under due command. The appetites of the body are only to be reduced by universal temperance, and assiduous mortification and watchfulness over all the senses. The interior powers of the soul must be restrained, as the imagination, memory, and understanding: their proneness to distraction, and the itching curiosity of the mind, must be curbed, and their repugnance to attend to spiritual things corrected by habits of recollection, holy meditation, and prayer. Above all, the will must be rendered supple and pliant by frequent self-denial, which must reach and keep in subjection all its most trifling sallies and inclinations. If any of these, how insignificant soever they may seem, are not restrained and vanquished, they will prove sufficient often to disturb the quiet of the mind, and betray one into considerable inconveniences, faults, and follies. Great weaknesses are sometimes fed by temptations which seem almost of too little moment to deserve notice. And though these infirmities

should not arise to any great height, they always fetter the soul, and are an absolute impediment to her progress toward perfection.

ST. RICHARD, KING AND C.

THIS saint was an English prince, in the kingdom of the West-Saxons, and was perhaps deprived of his inheritance by some revolution in the state: or he renounced it to be more at liberty to dedicate himself to the pursuit of Christian perfection. His three children, Winebald, Willibald, and Warburga, are all honoured as saints. Taking with him his two sons, he undertook a pilgrimage of penance and devotion, and sailing from Hamble-haven, landed in Neustria on the western coasts of France. He made a considerable stay at Rouen, and made his devotions in the most holy places that lay in his way through France. Being arrived at Lucca in Italy, in his road to Rome, he there died suddenly about the year 722, and was burried in St. Fridian's church there. His relics are venerated to this day in the same place, and his festival kept at Lucca with singular devotion. St. Richard, when living, obtained by his prayers the recovery of his younger son Willibald, whom he laid at the foot of a great crucifix erected in a public place in England, when the child's life was despaired of in a grievous sickness: and since his death many have experienced the miraculous power of his intercession with God, especially where his relics invite the devotion of the faithful. His festival is kept at Lucca, and his name honoured in the Roman Martyrology on the 7th of February. See the Life of St. Willibald by his cousin, a nun of Heidenheim, in Canisius's Lectiones Antiquæ, with the notes of Basnage.

ST. THEODORUS OF HERACLEA, M.

AMONG those holy martyrs whom the Greeks honour with the title of Megalomartyrs (*i. e.* great martyrs) as St. George, St. Pantaleon, &c. four are distinguished by them above the rest as principal patrons, namely St. Theodorus of Heraclea, surnamed Stratilates, (*i. e.* general of the army) St. Theodorus of Amasea, surnamed Tyro, St. Procopius, and St. Demetrius. The first was general of the forces of Licinius, and governor of the country of the Mariandyni, who occupied part of Bythinia, Pontus, and Paphlagoni, whose capital at that time was Heraclea of Pontus, though originally a city of Greeks, being founded by a colony from Megara. This was the place of our saint's residence, and here he glorified God by martyrdom, being beheaded for his faith by an order of the emperor Licinius, the 7th of February, on a Saturday, in 319, as the Greek Menæa and Menologies all agree: for the Greek Acts of his martyrdom, under the name of Augarus, are of no authority.

It appears from a Novella of the emperor Manuel Comnenus, and from Balsamon's Scholia on the Nomocanon of Photius, (Tit. 7. c. 1. Thomassin, l. 1. c. 7, n. 3.) that the Greeks kept as semi-festivals, that is, as holydays till noon, both the 7th of February, which was the day of his martyrdom, and that of the translation of his relics, the 8th of June, when they were conveyed soon after his death, according to his own appointment, to Euchaia, or Euchaitæ, where was the burial place of his ancestors, a day's journey from Amasea, the capital of all Pontus. This town became so famous for his shrine, that the name of Theodorcpolis was given it; and out of devotion to this saint, pilgrims resorted thither from all parts of the east, as appears from the Spiritual Meadow, (Prat. Spir. c. 180.) Zonaras (Zonar. 3. parte Annal.) and Cedrenus. (Ced. in Joanne Zemisce Imp.) The two latter historians relate, that the emperor John I. surnamed Zemisces, about the year 970, ascribed a great victory which he gained over the Saracens, to the patronage of this martyr; and in thanksgiving rebuilt in a stately manner the church where his relics were deposited at Euchaitæ. 1 The republic of Venice, has a singular veneration for

1 See Baronius in his notes on the Martyrology (ad 9 Nov.) who justly censures those who confound this saint with St. Theodorus Tyro, as Fabricius has since done. (t. 9. Bibl. Græcæ, p. 147.) Yet himself falsely places Tyro's shrine at Euchaitæ, and ascribes to him these pilgrimages and miracles which certainly belong to St. Theodorus Stratilates, or of Heraclea.

the memory of St. Theodorus of Heraclea, who as Bernard Justinian proves (De Rebus Venetis, l. 6.) was titular patron of the church of St. Mark in that city, before the body of that evangelist was translated into it from another part of the city. A famous statue of this St. Theodorus is placed upon one of the two fine pillars which stand in the square of St. Mark. The relics of this glorious martyr are honoured in the magnificient church of St. Saviour at Venice, whither they were brought by Mark Dandolo in 1260, from Constantinople; James Dandolo having sent them to that capital from Mesembria, an archiepiscopal maritime town in Romania, or the coast of Thrace, when in 1256 he scoured the Euxine sea with a fleet of gallies of the republic, as the Venetian historians inform us. (Sansovin, l. 13 Hist. &c.) See archbishop Falconius, Not. in Tabulis Cappon. and Jos. Assemani in Calend. Univ. on the 8th and 17th of February, and the 8th of June; 1 also Lubin, Not. in Martyr. Rom. p. 283. and the Greek Synaxary.

ST. TRESAIN, IN LATIN, TRESANUS, PRIEST, C.

He was an holy Irish priest, who having left his own country preached with great zeal in France, and died curate of Mareuil upon the Marne, in the sixth century. His relics are held in great veneration at Avenay in Champagne. See his life in Colgan and Bollandus,

ST. AUGULUS, B. M.

His name occurs with the title of bishop in all the manuscript copies of the ancient Western Martyrology, which bears the name of St. Jerom. That of the abbey of Esternach, which is very old, and several others, style him martyr. He probably received that crown soon after St. Alban. All martyrologies place him in Britain, and at Augusta, which name was given to London, as Amm. Marcellinus mentions; never to York, for which Henschenius would have it to be taken in this place, because it was at that time the capital of Britain. In the ancient copy of Bede's martyrology, which was used at St. Agnan's at Orleans, he is called St. Augustus; in some others St. Augurius. The French call him St. Aule. Chatelain thinks him to be the same

1 The modern Greeks have transferred his feast from the 7th to the 8th of February.

saint who is famous in some parts of Normandy under the name of St. Ouil.

FEBRUARY VIII.

ST. JOHN OF MATHA,

FOUNDER OF THE ORDER OF THE TRINITARIANS.

From several bulls of Innocent III. and the many authors of his life.

A. D. 1213.

St. John was born of very pious and noble parents, at Faucon, on the borders of Provence, June the 24th, 1169, and was baptized John, in honour of St. John the Baptist. His mother dedicated him to God by a vow from his infancy. His father Euphemius sent him to Aix, where he learned grammar, fencing, riding, and other exercises fit for a young nobleman. But his chief attention was to advance in virtue. He gave the poor a considerable part of the money his parents sent him for his own use: he visited the hospital every Friday, assisting the poor sick, dressing and cleansing their sores, and affording them all the comfort in his power.

Being returned home, he begged his father's leave to continue the pious exercises he had begun, and retired to a little hermitage not far from Faucon, with the view of living at a distance from the world, and united to God alone by mortification and prayer. But finding his solitude interrupted by the frequent visits of his friends, he desired his father's consent to go to Paris to study divinity, which he easily obtained. He went through these more sublime studies with extraordinary success, and proceeded doctor of divinity with uncommon applause, though his modesty gave him a reluctancy to that honour. He

was soon after ordained priest, and said his first mass in the bishop of Paris's chapel, at which the bishop himself, Maurice de Sully, the abbots of St. Victor and of St. Genevieve, and the rector of the university assisted; admiring the graces of heaven in him, which appeared in his extraordinary devotion on this occasion as well as at his ordination.

On the day he said his first mass, by a particular inspiration from God, he came to a resolution of devoting himself to the occupation of ransoming Christian slaves from the captivity they groaned under among the infidels: considering it as one of the highest acts of charity with respect both to their souls and bodies. But before he entered upon so important a work, he thought it needful to spend some time in retirement, prayer, and mortification. And having heard of an holy hermit, St. Felix Valois, living in a great wood near Gandelu, in the diocess of Meux, he repaired to him, and begged he would admit him into his solitude, and instruct him in the practice of perfection. Felix soon discovered him to be no novice, and would not treat him as a disciple, but as a companion. It is incredible what progress these two holy solitaries made in the paths of virtue, by perpetual prayer, contemplation, fasting, and watching.

One day, sitting together on the bank of a spring, John disclosed to Felix the design he had conceived on the day on which he said his first mass, to succour the Christians under the Mahometan slavery, and spoke so movingly upon the subject that Felix was convinced that the design was from God, and offered him his joint concurrence to carry it into execution. They took some time to recommend it to God by prayer and fasting, and then set out for Rome in the midst of a severe winter, towards the end of the year 1197, to obtain the pope's benediction. They found

Innocent III. promoted to the chair of St. Peter, who being already informed of their sanctity and charitable design by letters of recommendation from the bishop of Paris, his holiness received them as two angels from heaven; lodged them in his own palace, and gave them many long private audiences. After which he assembled the cardinals and some bishops in the palace of St. John Lateran, and asked their advice. After their deliberations he ordered a fast and particular prayers to know the will of heaven. At length being convinced that these two holy men were led by the Spirit of God, and that great advantages would accrue to the church from such an institute, he consented to their erecting a new religious order, and declared St. John the first general minister. The bishop of Paris, and the abbot of St. Victor, were ordered to draw up their rules, which the pope approved by a bull, in 1198. He ordered the religious to wear a white habit, with a red and blue cross on the breast, and to take the name of the order of the Holy Trinity. He confirmed it some time after, adding new privileges by a second bull, dated in 1209.

The two founders having obtained the pope's blessing and certain indults or privileges, returned to France, presented themselves to the king, Philip Augustus, who authorized the establishment of their Order in his kingdom, and favoured it with his liberalities. Gaucher III. lord of Chatillon, gave them land whereon to build a convent. Their number increasing, the same lord, seconded by the king, gave them Cerfroid, the place in which St. John and St. Felix concerted the first plan of their institute. It is situated in Brie, on the confines of Valois. This house of Cerfroid, or De Cervo frigido, is the chief of the order. The two saints founded many other convents in France, and sent several of their religious to accompany the counts of Flanders and

Blois, and other lords, to the holy war. Pope Innocent III. wrote to recommend these religious to Miramolin, king of Morocco; and St. John sent thither two of his religious in 1201, who redeemed one hundred and eighty-six Christian slaves the first voyage. The year following, St. John went himself to Tunis, where he purchased the liberty of one hundred and ten more. He returned into Provence, and there received great charities, which he carried into Spain, and redeemed many in captivity under the Moors. On his return he collected large alms among the Christians towards this charitable undertaking. His example produced a second order of Mercy, instituted by St. Peter Nolasco, in 1235.

St. John made a second voyage to Tunis in 1210, in which he suffered much from the infidels, enraged at his zeal and success in exhorting the poor slaves to patience and constancy in their faith. As he was returning with one hundred and twenty slaves he had ransomed, the barbarians took away the helm from his vessel, and tore all its sails, that they might perish in the sea. The saint, full of confidence in God, begged him to be their pilot, and hung up his companions' cloaks for sails, and, with a crucifix in his hands, kneeling on the deck, singing psalms, after a prosperous voyage they all landed safe at Ostia, in Italy. Felix, by this time, had greatly propagated his order in France, and obtained for it a convent in Paris, in a place where stood before a chapel of St. Mathurin, whence these religious in France are called Mathurins.

St. John lived two years more in Rome, which he employed in exhorting all to penance with great energy and fruit. He died on the 21st of December in 1213, aged sixty-one. He was buried in his church of St. Thomas, where his monument yet remains, though his body has been translated into Spain. Pope Honorius III. con-

firmed the rule of this order a second time. By the first rule, they were not permitted to buy any thing for their sustenance except bread, pulse, herbs, oil, eggs, milk, cheese, and fruit; never flesh nor fish: however, they might eat flesh on the principal festivals, on condition it was given them. They were not, in travelling, to ride on any beasts but asses.[1]

St. Chrysostom[2] elegantly and pathetically extols the charity of the widow of Sarepta, whom neither poverty, nor children, nor hunger, nor fear of death, withheld from affording relief to the prophet Elias, and he exhorts every one to meditate on her words, and keep her example present to his mind. "How hard or insensible soever we are," says he, "they will make a deep impression upon us, and we shall not be able to refuse relief to the poor, when we have before our eyes the generous charity of this widow. It is true you will tell me, that if you meet with a prophet in want, you could not refuse doing him all the

1 A mitigation of this rule was approved by pope Clement IV. in 1267, which allows them to use horses, and to buy fish, flesh, and all other necessaries: on which mitigations see Historia prolixior Priorum Grandimont, published by Martenne, Ampliff. Collectio, t. 6. p. 138. This order is possessed of about two hundred and fifty monasteries, divided into thirteen provinces, in France, Spain, Italy, and Portugal. That formerly in England had forty-three houses; that in Scotland nine, and that in Ireland fifty-two. The general of the order is chosen by a general chapter, which is always held at Cerfroid. Each house is governed by a superior who is called minister. Those in the provinces of Champagne, Normandy, and Picardy (which last includes Flanders) are perpetual; but in Italy and Spain, triennial. Their rule is that of the canons regular of St. Austin. Their principal exercises are to sing the divine office at the canonical hours, praising and glorifying the adorable Trinity, as angels of the earth; and to gather and carry alms into Barbary for the redemption of slaves, to which work one third of the revenues of each house is applied. A reformation was made in this order in the years 1573 and 1576, which, by degrees, has been introduced into the greater part of the convents, and into that of Cerfroid itself. These never eat meat except on Sundays, sing matins at midnight, and wear no linen. The reformation of the barefooted Trinitarians, still much more severe, was set on foot in Spain, in 1594, by John Baptist of the Conception, who suffered many persecutions in the undertaking, and died in 1613, in great reputation for sanctity and miracles, the examination of which has been commenced in order to his beatification.

2 Hom. de Elia et Vidua Sarept. p. 33. 323. ed. Montf.

good offices in your power. But what ought you not to do for Jesus Christ, who is the master of the prophets? He takes whatsoever you do to the poor as done to himself." When we consider the zeal and joy with which the saints sacrificed themselves for their neighbours, how must we blush at, and condemn our insensibility at the spiritual and the corporal calamities of others! The saints regarded affronts, labours, and pains, as nothing for the service of others in Christ: we cannot bear the least word or roughness of temper.

ST. STEPHEN OF GRANDMONT, ABBOT.

Dom Martenne has given us a new and accurate edition of this life. Vet. Scriptorum Collectio.

A. D. 1124.

ST. STEPHEN was son of the virtuous viscount of Thiers, the first nobleman of Auvergne. From his infancy he gave presages of an uncommon sanctity. Milo, a pious priest, at that time dean of the church of Paris, was appointed his tutor, and being made bishop of Beneventum in 1074, kept the saint with him, continued to instruct him in sacred learning, and in the maxims of Christian perfection, and ordained him deacon. After his death in 1076, Stephen pursued his studies in Rome during four years. All this time he seemed to himself continually solicited by an interior voice to seek a sanctuary for his soul in holy solitude, considering the dangers of the pastoral charge, the obligations of leading a penitential life, and the happiness of the exercises of holy retirement. He desired to imitate the rigorous institute of a certain monastery, which he had seen in Calabria, and obtained leave of pope Gregory VII. to embrace an eremitical life. He therefore returned to the castle of Thiers, the seat of his late parents, to settle his affairs. He had always been their favourite

child, and regarded by them as the blessing bestowed on their prayers and fasts, by which they had begged him of God. Being both exceeding pious, they had rejoiced to see him so virtuously inclined; but they being now dead, his other friends vehemently opposed his design of renouncing the world. Stephen left them privately, and travelling through many deserts, arrived at Muret, a desolate, barren mountain, in the neighbourhood of Limoges, haunted by wild beasts, and of an exceeding cold situation. Here he took up his abode, and, by a vow, consecrated himself to the divine service, in these words, "I, Stephen, renounce the devil and his pomps, and do offer and dedicate myself to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God in three Persons." This engagement he wrote and kept always by him with a ring as the symbol. He built himself a hut with the boughs of trees, and in this place passed forty-six years in prayer, and the practise of such austerities as almost surpassed the strength of a human body.[1] He lived at first on wild herbs and roots. In the second summer he was discovered by certain shepherds, who brought him a little coarse bread; which some country people from that time continued to do as long as he lived. He always wore next his skin a hair-cloth with iron plates and hoops studded with sharp spikes, over which his only garment, made of the coarsest stuff, was the same both in summer and winter. When overcome by sleep, he took a short rest on rough boards, laid in the form of a coffin. When he was not employed in manual

1 William of Dandina, an accurate writer, in the life of Hugh of Lacerta, the most famous among the first disciples of St. Stephen, published by Martenne, (t. 6. p. 1143.) says, that the saint died in the forty-sixth year after his conversion. His retreat, therefore, cannot be dated before the year 1078, and the foundation of his order, which some place in 1076, must have been posterior to this. Gerard Ithier mistakes when he says that St. Stephen went to Benevento in the twelfth year of his age; and remained there twelve years. He went only then to Paris to Milo, who was bishop only two years. See Martenne, p. 1053.

labour, he lay prostrate on the ground in profound adoration of the majesty of God. The sweetness which he felt in divine contemplation made him often forget to take any refreshment for two or three days together. When sixty years of age, finding his stomach exceeding weak, he suffered a few drops of wine to be mixed with the water which he drank.

Many were desirous to live with him and become his disciples. Though most rigorous to himself, he was mild to those under his direction, and proportioned their mortifications to their strength. But he allowed no indulgence with regard to the essential points of a solitary life, silence, poverty, and the denial of self-will. He often exhorted his disciples to a total disengagement of their hearts from all earthly things, and to a love of holy poverty for that purpose. He used to say to those who desired to be admitted into his community, "This is a prison without either door or hole whereby to return into the world, unless a person makes for himself a breach. And should this misfortune befall you, I could not send after you, none here having any commerce with the world any more than myself." He behaved himself among his disciples as the last of them, always taking the lowest place, never suffering any one to rise up to him; and whilst they were at table, he would seat himself on the ground in the midst of them, and read to them the lives of the saints. God bestowed on him a divine light, by which he often told others their secret thoughts. The author of his life gives a long history of miracles which he wrought. But the conversions of many obstinate sinners were still more miraculous: it seemed as if no heart could resist the grace which accompanied his words.

Two cardinals coming into France, as legates to the king from the pope, one of whom was af-

terward pope Innocent II., paid the saint a visit in his desert. They asked him whether he was a canon, a monk, or an hermit. He said he was none of those. Being pressed to declare what he was, "We are sinners," said he, "whom the mercy of God hath conducted into this wilderness to do penance. The pope himself hath imposed on us these exercises, at our request, for our sins. Our imperfection and frailty deprive us of courage to imitate the fervour of those holy hermits who lived in divine contemplation almost without any thought for their bodies. You see that we neither wear the habit of monks nor of canons. We are still further from usurping those names, which we respect and honour at a distance in the persons of the priests, and in the sanctity of the monks. We are poor, wretched sinners, who, terrified at the rigour of the divine justice, still hope, with trembling, by this means, to find mercy from our Lord Jesus Christ in the day of his judgment." The legates departed exceedingly edified at what they saw and heard. Eight days after the saint was admonished by God of the end of his mortal course, after which he most earnestly sighed. He redoubled his fervour in all his exercises, and falling sick soon after, gave his disciples his last instructions, and exhorted them to a lively confidence in God, to whom he recommended them by an humble prayer. His exhortation was so moving and strong that it dispelled their fears in losing him, and they seemed to enter into his own sentiments. He caused himself to be carried into the chapel, where he heard mass, received extreme unction and the viaticum; and on the 8th day of February, 1124, being fourscore years old, expired in peace, repeating those words, "*Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*" He had passed in his desert fifty years, bating two months. His disciples buried him privately, to prevent the

crowds of people breaking in. But the news of his death drew incredible numbers to his tomb, which was honoured by innumerable miracles. Four months after his death, the priory of Ambazac, dependent on the great Benedictin abbey of St. Austin, in Limoges, put in a claim to the land of Muret. The disciples of the holy man, who had inherited his maxims and spirit, abandoned the ground to them without any contention, and retired to Grandmont, a desert one league distant, carrying with them his precious remains. From this place the order took its name. The saint was canonized by Clement III., in 1189, at the request of king Henry II. of England. See Gallia Christ. Nova, t. 2. p. 646

APPENDIX

TO

THE LIFE OF ST. STEPHEN OF GRANDMONT.

Such was the fervour and sanctity of the first disciples of St. Stephen of Grandmont, that they were the admiration of the world in the age wherein they lived. Peter, the learned and pious abbot of Celles, calls them angels, and testifies that he placed an extraordinary confidence in their prayers. (Petr. Cellens. ep. 8.) John of Salisbury, a contemporary author, represents them as men who, being raised above the necessities of life, had conquered not only sensuality and avarice, but even nature itself. (Joan. Salisb. Poly. l. 7. c. 23.) Stephen, bishop of Tournay, speaks of them in as high strains (Steph. Tournac. ep. 2.) Trithemius, Yepez, and Miræus, imagined that St. Stephen made the rule of St. Bennet the basis of his order; and Mabillon at first embraced this opinion, (Mabill. Præf. in part 2. sec. 6. Bened.) but changed it afterward, (Annal. Bened. l. 64. n. 37 and 112.) proving that this saint neither followed the rule of Saint Bennet nor that of St. Austin. Dom Martenne has set this in a much fuller light in his preface to the sixth tome of his great collection. (Amplise Collect. t. 6. n. 20, &c.) Baillet, Helyot, and

some others, pretend that St. Stephen never wrote any thing himself, and that his rule was compiled by some of his successors from his sayings, and from the discipline which he had established. But some of the very passages to which these critics appeal, suffice to confute them, and St. Stephen declares himself the author of the writtten rule both in the prologue, and in several other places, (Regula Grandim. c. 9. 11. 14.) as Mabillon, or rather Martenne, (who was author of this addition to his annals,) takes notice. (Annal. t. 6. l. 74. n. 91.) The rule of this holy founder consists of seventy-five chapters. In a pathetic prologue he puts his disciples in mind, that the rule of rules, and the origin of all monastic rules, is the gospel: they are but streams derived from this source, and in it are all the means of arriving at Christian perfection pointed out. He recommends strict poverty and obedience, as the foundation of a religious life; forbids his religious ever to recieve any retributions for their masses, or to open the door of their oratory to secular persons on Sundays or holydays, because on these days they ought to attend to their parish churches. He forbids his religious all law-suits. (Reg. c. 15. See Chatelain, Notes sur le Martyr. p. 378.) He forbids them the use of flesh meat even in time of sickness, and prescribes rigorous fasts, with only one meal a day for a great part of the year. This rule, which was approved by Urban III. in 1186, was mitigated by pope Innocent IV. in 1247, and again by Clement V. in 1309. It is printed at Rouen in 1672. Besides this rule, certain maxims or instructions of St. Stephen are extant, and were collected together by his disciples after his death. They were printed at Paris in Latin and French, in 1704. Baillet published a new translation of them in 1707. In them we admire the beauty and fruitfulness of the author's genius, and still much more the great sentiments of virtue which they contain, especially concerning temptations, vain-glory, ambition, the sweetness of God's service, and his holy commandments; the obligation without bounds which all men have of loving God, the incomprehensible advantages of praising him, the necessity of continually advancing in fervour, and of continually gathering, by the practice of good works, new flowers, of which the garland of our lives ought to be composed. This useful collection might doubtless have been made much more ample by his disciples. Several other holy maxims and short lessons delivered by him, occur in the most ancient of his lives, entitled, Stephani Dicta et Facta, compiled by the care of St. Stephen de Liciaco. (Martenne t. 6. p. 1046.)

ST. PAUL, BISHOP OF VERDUN, C.

HAVING lived in the world a perfect pattern of perfection by alms, fasts, assiduous prayer, meekness, and charity, he retired among the hermits of Mount Voge, near Triers, on a hill called from him Paulberg. King Dagobert placed him in the episcopal chair of Verdun, and was his protector in his zealous labours, and ample foundations of that church. The saint died in 631. See his authentic anonymous life in Henschenius

ST. CUTHMAN, C.

THE spiritual riches of divine grace were the happy portion of this saint, who seemed from his cradle formed to perfect virtue. His name demonstrates him to have been an English-Saxon, not of British extraction, either from Wales or Cornwall, as Bollandus conjectured. He was born in the southern parts of England, and from the example of his pious parents, inherited the most perfect spirit of Christian piety. From his infancy he never once transgressed their orders, in the least article, and when sent by his father to keep his sheep, he never failed coming home exactly at the time appointed. This employment afforded him an opportunity of consecrating his affections to God, by the exercises of holy prayer, which only necessary occasions seemed to interrupt, and which he may be said to have always continued in spirit, according to that of the spouse in the Canticles, I sleep, but my heart watcheth. By the constant union of his soul with God, and application to the functions and exercises of the angels, the affections of his soul were rendered daily more and more pure, and his sentiments and whole conduct more heavenly and angelical.

What gave his prayer this wonderful force in correcting and transforming his affections, was the perfect spirit of simplicity, disengagement from creatures, self-denial, meekness, humility, obedience, and piety in which it was founded. We find so little change in our souls by our devotions, because we neglect the practice of self-denial and mortification, live wedded to the world, and slaves to our senses and to self-love, which is an insuperable obstacle to this principal effect of holy prayer. Cuthman, after the death of his father, employed his whole fortune and all that he gained by the labour of his hands in supporting his decrepit mother: and afterward was not ashamed to beg for her subsistence. To furnish her necessaries by the sweat of his brow, and by the charitable succours of others, he removed to several places; nor is it to be expressed what hardships and austerities he voluntarily and cheerfully suffered, which he embraced as part of his penance, increasing their severity in order more perfectly to die to himself and to his senses, and sanctifying them by the most perfect dispositions in which he bore them. Finding at a place called Steninges, a situation according to his desire, he built there a little cottage to be a shelter from the injuries of the air, in which, with his mother, he might devote himself to the divine service without distraction. His hut was no sooner finished but he measured out the ground near it for the foundation of a church, which he dug with his own hands. The inhabitants, animated by his piety and zeal, contributed liberally to assist him in completing this work. The holy man worked himself all day, conversing at the same time in his heart with God, and employed a considerable part of the night in prayer. Here he said in his heart, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, O Lord! this is the place of my rest for ever and ever, in which I will every day render to thee my vows." His name was

rendered famous by many miracles, of which God was pleased to make him the instrument, both living and after his death. He flourished about the eighth century, and his relics were honoured at Steninges.

This place Saint Edward the Confessor bestowed on the great abbey of Fecam in Normandy, which was enriched with a portion of his relics. This donation of Steninges, together with Rye, Berimunster, and other neighbouring places made to the abbey of Fecam, was confirmed to the same by William the Conqueror, and the two first Henrys, whose charters are still kept among the archives of that house, and were shown me there. This parish and that of Rye, were of the exemption of Fecam, that is, were not subject to the jurisdiction of the diocesan, but to this abbey, as twenty-four parishes in Normandy are to this day. For in the enumeration of the parishes which belong to this exemption in the bulls of several popes, in which it is confirmed, Steninges and Rye are always mentioned with this additional clause, that those places are situated in England. St. Cuthman was titular patron of Steninges or Estaninges, and is honoured to this day, on the 8th of February, in the great abbeys of Fecam, Jumieges, and others in Normandy: and his name occurs in the old Missal, used by the English Saxons, before the Norman conquest, kept in the monastery of Jumieges, in which a proper mass is assigned for his feast on the 8th of February. In the account of the principal shrines of relics of saints, honoured anciently in England, published by the most learned Dr. Hickes, mention is made of St. Cuthman's, as follows: "At Steninge, on the river Bramber, among the South-Saxons, rests St. Cuthman." See Narratio de Sanctis qui in Anglia quiescunt, published by Hickes.

FEBRUARY IX.

ST. APOLLONIA, VIRGIN AND MARTYR.

Her authentic history is in the letter of Saint Dionysius, then bishop of Alexandria, preserved by Eusebius.

A. D. 249.

St. Dionysius of Alexandria wrote to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, a relation of the persecution raised at Alexandria by the heathen populace of that city, in the last year of the reign of the emperor Philip. A certain poet of Alexandria, who

pretended to foretell things to come, stirred up this great city against the Christians on the motive of religion. The first victim of their rage was a venerable old man, named Metras, or Metrius, whom they would have compelled to utter impious words against the worship of the true God: which, when he refused to do, they beat him with staffs, thrust splinters of reeds into his eyes, and having dragged him into one of the suburbs, stoned him to death. The next person they seized was a Christian woman, called Quinta, whom they carried to one of their temples to pay divine worship to the idol. She loaded the execrable divinity with many reproaches, which so exasperated the people that they dragged her by the heels upon the pavement of sharp pebbles, cruelly scourged her, and put her to the same death. The rioters, by this time, were in the height of their fury. Alexandria seemed like a city taken by storm. The Christians made no opposition, but betook themselves to flight, and beheld the loss of their goods with joy; for their hearts had no ties on earth. Their constancy was equal to their disinterestedness; for of all who fell into their hands, St. Dionysius knew of none that renounced Christ.

The admirable Apollonia, whom old age and the state of virginity rendered equally venerable, was seized by them. Their repeated blows on her jaws beat out all her teeth. At last they made a great fire without the city, and threatened to cast her into it, if she did not utter certain impious words. She begged a moment's delay, as if it had been to deliberate on the proposal; but to convince her persecutors that her sacrifice was perfectly voluntary, she no sooner found herself at liberty, than of her own accord she leaped into the flames. They next exercised their fury on an holy man called Serapion, and tortured him in his own house with great cruelty. After bruis-

ing his limbs, disjointing and breaking his bones, they threw him headlong from the top of the house on the pavement and so completed his martyrdom. A civil war among the pagan citizens put an end to their fury this year, but the edict of Decius renewed it in 250. See the rest of the relation on the 27th of February. An ancient church in Rome which is frequented with great devotion bears the name of Saint Apollonia: under whose patronage we meet with churches and altars in most parts of the Western church.

The last part of our saint's conduct is not proposed to our imitation, as self-murder is unjustifiable. If any among the Fathers have commended it, they presumed, with St. Austin, that it was influenced by a particular direction of the Holy Ghost, or was the effect of a pious simplicity, founded in motives of holy zeal and charity. For it can never be lawful for a person by any action wilfully to concur to, or hasten his own death, though many martyrs out of an ardent charity, and desire of laying down their lives for God, and being speedily united to him, anticipated the executioners in completing their sacrifice. Among the impious, absurd, and false maxims of the Pagan Greeks and Romans, scarce any thing was more monstrous than the manner in which they canonized suicide in distress, as a remedy against temporal miseries, and a point of heroism. To bear infamy and all kind of sufferings with unshaken constancy and virtue is true courage and greatness of soul, and the test and triumph of virtue; and to sink under misfortunes, is the most unworthy baseness of soul. But what name can we find for the pusillanimity of those who are not able so much as to look humiliations, poverty, or affliction in the face? Our life we hold of God, and he who destroys it injures God, to whom he owes it. He refuses also to his friends and to the republic of mankind, the comfort and

succours which they are entitled in justice or charity to receive from him. Moreover, if to murder another is the greatest temporal injustice a man can commit against a neighbour, life being of all temporal blessings the greatest and most noble, suicide is a crime so much more enormous, as the charity which every one owes to himself, especially to his immortal soul, is stricter, more noble, and of a superior order to that which he owes to his neighbour.

SAINT NICEPHORUS, M.

From his genuine Acts in Ruinart, p. 244.

A. D 260.

THERE dwelt in Antioch a priest called Sapricius, and a layman, named Nicephorus, who had been linked together for many years by the strictest friendship. But the enemy of mankind sowing between them the seeds of discord, this their friendship was succeeded by the most implacable hatred, and they declined meeting each other in the streets. Thus it continued a considerable time. At length, Nicephorus, entering into himself, and reflecting on the grievousness of the sin of hatred, resolved on seeking a reconciliation. He accordingly deputed some friends to go to Sapricius to beg his pardon, promising him all reasonable satisfaction for the injury done him. But the priest refused to forgive him. Nicephorus sent other friends to him on the same errand, but though they pressed and entreated him to be reconciled, Sapricius was inflexible. Nicephorus sent a third time, but to no purpose; Sapricius having shut his ears not to men only but to Christ himself, who commands us to forgive as we ourselves hope to be forgiven. Nicephorus, finding him deaf to the remonstrances of their common friends, went in person to his house, and casting

himself at his feet owned his fault, and begged pardon for Christ's sake, but all in vain.

The persecution suddenly began to rage under Valerian and Gallien in the year 260. Sapricius was apprehended and brought before the governor, who asked him his name. "It is Sapricius," answered he. Governor. "Of what profession are you?" Sapricius. "I am a Christian." Governor. "Are you of the clergy?" Sapricius. "I have the honour to be a priest." He added, "We Christians acknowledge one Lord and Master Jesus Christ, who is God; the only and true God, who created heaven and earth. The gods of nations are devils." The president, exasperated at his answers, gave orders for him to be put into an engine, like a screw press, which the tyrants had invented to torment the faithful. The excessive pain of this torture did not shake Sapricius's constancy, and he said to the judges, "My body is in your power; but my soul you cannot touch. Only my Saviour Jesus Christ is master of this." The president seeing him so resolute, pronounced this sentence: "Sapricius, priest of the Christians, who is ridiculously persuaded that he shall rise again, shall be delivered over to the executioner of public justice to have his head severed from his body, because he has contemned the edict of the emperors."

Sapricius seemed to receive the sentence with great cheerfulness, and was in haste to arrive at the place of execution in hopes of his crown. Nicephorus ran out to meet him, and casting himself at his feet, said, "Martyr of Jesus Christ, forgive me my offence." But Sapricius made him no answer. Nicephorus waited for him in another street which he was to pass through, and as soon as he saw him coming up, broke through the crowd, and falling again at his feet, conjured him to pardon the fault he had committed against him, through frailty, rather than design. This

he begged by the glorious confession he had made of the divinity of Jesus Christ. Sapricius's heart was more and more hardened, and now he would not so much as look on him. The soldiers laughed at Nicephorus, saying, "A greater fool than thee was never seen, in being so solicitous for a man's pardon who is upon the point of being executed." Being arrived at the place of execution, Nicephorus redoubled his humble entreaties and supplications, but all in vain; for Sapricius continued as obstinate as ever, in refusing to forgive. The executioners said to Sapricius, "Kneel down that we may cut off your head." Sapricius said, "Upon what account?" They answered, "Because you will not sacrifice to the gods, nor obey the emperor's orders, for the love of that man that is called Christ." The unfortunate Sapricius cried out, "Stop, my friends; do not put me to death: I will do what you desire: I am ready to sacrifice." Nicephorus, sensibly afflicted at his apostasy, cried aloud to him, "Brother, what are you doing? renounce not Jesus Christ our good master. Forfeit not a crown you have already gained by tortures and sufferings." But Sapricius would give no manner of attention to what he said. Whereupon, Nicephorus, with tears of bitter anguish for the fall of Sapricius, said to the executioners, "I am a Christian, and believe in Jesus Christ, whom this wretch has renounced; behold me here ready to die in his stead." All present were astonished at such an unexpected declaration. The officers of justice being under an uncertainty how to proceed, despatched a lictor or beadle to the governor with this message: "Sapricius promiseth to sacrifice, but here is another desirous to die for the same Christ, saying, I am a Christian and refuse to sacrifice to your gods, and comply with the edicts of the emperors." The governor on hearing this, dictated the following sentence: "If this man persist in refusing

to sacrifice to the immortal gods, let him die by the sword:" which was accordingly put in execution. Thus Nicephorus received three immortal crowns, namely, of faith, humility, and charity, triumphs which Sapricius had made himself unworthy of. The Greek and Roman Martyrologies mention him on this day.

SAINT THELIAU, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR.

He was born in the same province with Saint Samson, at Eccluis-Guenwau, near Monmouth. His sister Anaumed went over to Armorica, in 490, and upon her arrival was married to Budic, king of the Armorican Britons. Before she left her own country she promised Saint Theliau to consecrate her first child in a particular manner to God. Our saint was educated under the holy discipline of St. Dubritius, and soon after the year 500, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem with his schoolfellows St. David and St. Paternus. In their return St. David stopped at Dole, with Sampson the elder, who had been bishop of York, but being expelled by the Saxons, fled to Armorica and was made bishop of Dole. This prelate and St. Theliau planted a great avenue, three miles long, from Dole to Cai, which for several ages was known by their names. The people of Dole, with the bishop and king Budic, pressed our saint to accept of that bishopric; but in vain. After his return into the island, St. Dubritius being removed from the see of Landaff to that of Caërleon, in 495, Theliau was compelled to succeed him at Landaff, of which church he has always been esteemed the principal patron. His great learning, piety, and pastoral zeal, especially in the choice and instruction of his clergy, have procured him a high reputation which no age can

ever obliterate, says Leland.[1] His authority alone decided whatever controversies arose in his time. When the yellow plague depopulated Wales, he exerted his courage and charity with an heroic intrepidity. Providence preserved his life for the sake of others, and he died about the year 580, in a happy old age, in solitude, where he had for some time prepared himself for his passage. The place where he had departed to our Lord was called from him Llan deilo-vaur, that is, the church of the great Theliau: it was situated on the bank of the river Tovy in Caermarthenshire. The Landaff register names amongst the most eminent of his disciples his nephew St. Oudoceus, who succeeded him in the see of Landaff, St. Ismael, whom he consecrated bishop, St. Tyfhei, martyr, who reposeth in Pennalun, &c. See Capgrave, Harpsfield, Wharton, &c.

ST. ANSBERT, ARCHBISHOP OF ROUEN, C. IN 695.

He had been chancellor to king Clotaire III., in which station he had united the mortification and recollection of a monk with the duties of wedlock and of a statesman. Quitting the court, he put on the monastic habit at Fontenelle under St. Wandregisile, and when that holy founder's immediate successor, St. Lantbert, was made bishop of Lyons, Ansbert was appointed abbot of that famous monastery. He was confessor to king Theodoric III. and with his consent was chosen archbishop of Rouen, upon the death of St. Owen in 683. By his care, good order, learning, and piety flourished in his diocess; nevertheless Pepin, mayor of the palace, banished him, upon a false accusation, to the monastery of Aumont, upon the Sambre in Hainault, where he died in the year 698. See Mab. Sæc. 2. Ben.

1 De Script, Brit. c. 30.

ST. ATTRACTA, OR TARAHATA, AN IRISH VIRGIN.

SHE received the veil from St. Patrick, and lived at a place called from her Kill-Attracta to this day in Connaught. Her acts in Colgan are of no authority.

ST. ERHARD, ABBOT, C.

CALLED BY MERSÆUS AND OTHER GERMANS, EBERHARDUS.

HE was a Scotsman by birth, and being well instructed in the scriptures, went into Germany to preach the gospel, with two brothers. He taught the sacred sciences at Triers, when St. Hydulphus was bishop of that city, whom Welser and some others take for a Scot, and one of our saint's brothers. When St. Hydulphus resigned his bishopric to end his days in retirement in 753, St. Erhard withdrew to Ratisbon, where he founded a small monastery, and is said to have been honoured with miracles, both living and after his death, which happened in that city. He was commemorated on this day in Scotland, but in Germany on the 8th of January. See Peter Merssæus.

FEBRUARY X.

ST. SCHOLASTICA, VIRGIN.

From St. Gregory the Great, Dial. 1. 2. c. 33. and 34.

About the year 543.

THIS saint was sister to the great St. Benedict. She consecrated herself to God from her earliest youth, as St. Gregory testifies. Where her first

monastery was situated is not mentioned: but after her brother removed to Mount Cassino, she chose her retreat at Plombariola, in that neighbourhood, where she founded and governed a nunnery about five miles distant to the south from St. Benedict's monastery.[1] St. Bertharius who was abbot of Cassino three hundred years after, says, that she instructed in virtue several of her own sex. And whereas St. Gregory informs us, that St. Benedict governed nuns as well as monks, his sister must have been their abbess, under his rule and direction. She visited her holy brother once a year, and as she was not allowed to enter his monastery, he went out with some of his monks to meet her at a house at some small distance. They spent these visits in the praises of God, and in conferring together on spiritual matters. St. Gregory relates a remarkable circumstance of the last of these visits. Scholastica having passed the day as usual in singing psalms, and pious discourse, they sat down in the evening to take their refection. After it was over, Scholastica, perhaps foreknowing it would be their last interview in this world, or at least desirous of some further spiritual improvement, was very urgent with her brother to delay his return till the next day, that they might entertain themselves till morning upon the happiness of the other life. St. Benedict, unwilling to transgress his rule, told her he could not pass a night out of his monastery: so desired

1 This nunnery underwent the same fate with the abbey of Mount Cassino, both being burnt to the ground by the Lombards. When Rachim, king of that nation, having been converted to the catholic faith by the exhortations of pope Zachary, re-established that abbey, and taking the monastic habit, ended his life there, his queen Tasia and his daughter Ratruda rebuilt and richly endowed the nunnery of Plombariola, in which they lived with great regularity to their deaths, as is related by Leo of Ostia in his Chronicle of Mount Cassino, ad an. 750. It has been since destroyed, so that at present the land is only a farm belonging to the monastery of Mount Cassino. See Dom Mege, Vie de St. Benoit, p. 412. Chatelain, Notes, p. 605. Muratori, Antichita, &c. t. 3. p. 400. Diss. 66. dei Monasteri delle Monache.

her not to insist upon such a breach of monastic discipline. Scholastica finding him resolved on going home, laying her hands joined upon the table and her head upon them, with many tears, begged of Almighty God to interpose in her behalf. Her prayer was scarce ended, when there happened such a storm of rain, thunder, and lightning, that neither St. Benedict nor any of his companions could set a foot out of doors. He complained to his sister saying, "God forgive you, sister; what have you done?" She answered, "I asked you a favour, and you refused it me; I asked it of Almighty God, and he has granted it me." St. Benedict was therefore obliged to comply with her request, and they spent the night in conferences on pious subjects, chiefly on the felicity of the blessed, to which both most ardently aspired, and which she was shortly to enjoy. The next morning they parted, and three days after St. Scholastica died in her solitude. St. Benedict was then alone in contemplation on Mount Cassino, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he saw the soul of his sister ascending thither in the shape of a dove. Filled with joy at her happy passage, he gave thanks for it to God, and declared her death to his brethren; some of whom he sent to bring her corpse to his monastery, where he caused it to be laid in the tomb which he had prepared for himself. She must have died about the year 543. Her relics are said to have been translated into France, together with those of St. Bennet, in the seventh century, according to the relation given by the monk Adrevald.[1] They are said to have been deposited at Mans, and kept in the collegiate church of St. Peter, in that city, in a rich silver shrine.[2] In 1562 this shrine was preserved from

1 See Paul the deacon, Hist. Longob. and Dom Mege, Vie de St. Benoit, p. 48.

2 That the relics of St. Bennet were privately carried off from

being plundered by the Hugonots, as is related by Chatelain. Her principal festival at Mans is kept a holyday on the 11th of July, the day of the translation of her relics. She was honoured in some places with an office of three lessons, in the time of St. Lewis, as appears from a calendar of Longchamp, wrote in his reign.

Lewis of Granada, treating on the perfection of the love of God, mentions the miraculous storm obtained by St. Scholastica, to show with what excess of goodness God is always ready to hear the petitions and desires of his servants. This pious soul must have received strong pledges and most sensible tokens of his love, seeing she depended on receiving so readily what she asked of him. No child could address himself with so great confidence to his most tender parent. The love which God bears us, and his readiness to succour and comfort us, if we humbly confess and lay before him our wants, infinitely surpasses all that can be found in creatures. Nor can we be surprised that he so easily heard the prayer of this holy virgin, since at the command of Joshua he stopped the heavens, God obeying the voice of man! He hears the most secret desires of those that fear and love him, and does their will: if he sometimes seems deaf to their cries, it is to grant

Mount Cassino, in 660, soon after the monastery was destroyed, and brought to Fleury on the Loire by Aigiulph the monk, and those of St. Scholastica by certain persons of Mans to that city, is maintained by Mabillon, Menard, and Bosche. But that the relics of both these saints still remain at Mount Cassino, is strennously affirmed by Loretus Angelus de Nuce, and Marchiarelli, the late learned monk of the Order of Camaldoli; and this assertion Benedict XIV. looks upon as certain. (de Canoniz. l. 4. part. 2. c. 24. t. 4. p. 245.) For pope Zachary in his bull assures us, that he devontly honoured the relics of SS. Benedict and Scholastica at Mount Cassino, in 746. Leo Ostiensis and Peter the deacon visited them and found them untouched in 1071, as Alexander II. affirms in the bull he published when he consecrated the new church there. By careful visitations made by authority, in 1486 and 1545, the same is proved. Yet Angelus de Nuce allows some portions of both saints to be at Mans and Fleury, on the Loire. Against the supposed translation of the whole shrines of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica into France, see Muratori, Antichita, &c. dissert. 58. t. 3. p. 244.

their main desire by doing what is most expedient for them, as St. Austin frequently observes. The short prayer by which St. Scholastica gained this remarkable victory over her brother, who was one of the greatest saints on earth, was doubtless no more than a single act of her pure desires, which she continually turned toward and fixed on her beloved. It was enough for her to cast her eyes interiorly upon him with whom she was closely and inseparably united in mind and affections, to move him so suddenly to change the course of the elements, in order to satisfy her pious desire. By placing herself, as a docile scholar, continually at the feet of the Divine Majesty, who filled all the powers of her soul with the sweetness of his heavenly communications, she learned that sublime science of perfection in which she became a mistress to so many other chaste souls by this divine exercise. Her life in her retirement, to that happy moment which closed her mortal pilgrimage, was a continued uniform contemplation, by which all her powers were united to, and transformed into God.

ST. SOTERIS, VIRGIN AND MARTYR.

From St. Ambrose, Exhort. Virginit. c. 12.

FOURTH AGE.

St. Ambrose boasts of this saint as the greatest honour of his family. St. Soteris was descended from a long series of consuls and prefects; but her greatest glory was her despising, for the sake of Christ, birth, riches, great beauty, and all that the world prizes as valuable. She consecrated her virginity to God, and to avoid the dangers her beauty exposed her to, neglected it entirely, and trampled under her feet all the vain ornaments that might set it off. Her virtue prepared her to make a glorious confession of her

faith before the persecutors, after the publication of the cruel edicts of Dioclesian and Maximian against the Christians. The impious judge commanded her face to be buffeted. She rejoiced to be treated as her divine Saviour had been, and to have her face all wounded and disfigured by the merciless blows of the executioners. The judge ordered her to be tortured many other ways, but without being able to draw from her one sigh or tear. At length, overcome by her constancy and patience, he commanded her head to be struck off. The ancient martyrologies mention her.

ST. WILLIAM OF MALEVAL, H.

AND INSTITUTOR OF THE ORDER OF GULIELMITES.

From l'Hist. des Ordres Relig. t. 6. p. 155. by F. Helyot.

A. D. 1157.

We know nothing of the birth or quality of this saint: he seems to have been a Frenchman, and is on this account honoured in the new Paris Missal and Breviary. He is thought to have passed his youth in the army, and to have given in to a licentious manner of living too common among persons of that profession. The first accounts we have of him represent him as an holy penitent, filled with the greatest sentiments of compunction and fervour, and making a pilgrimage to the tombs of the apostles at Rome. Here he begged pope Eugenius III. to put him into a course of penance, who enjoined him a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the year 1145. In performing this, with great devotion, the saint spent eight years. Returning into Tuscany in 1153, he retired into a desert. He was prevailed upon to undertake the government of a monastery in the isle of Lupocavio, in the territory of Pisa: but not being able to bear with the tepidity and irregularity of

his monks, he withdrew and settled on Mount Pruno, till finding disciples there no less indocile to the severity of his discipline than the former, he was determined to pursue himself that rigorous plan of life which he had hitherto unsuccessfully proposed to others. He pitched upon a desolate vailey for this purpose, the very sight of which was sufficient to strike the most resolute with horror. It was then called the stable of Rhodes, but since, Maleval; and is situated in the territory of Sienna, in the diocess of Grosseto. He entered this frightful solitude in September, 1155, and had no other lodging than a cave in the ground, till being discovered some months after, the lord of Buriano built him a cell. During the first four months, he had no other company but that of wild beasts, eating only the herbs on which they fed. On the feast of the Epiphany, in the beginning of the year 1156, he was joined by a disciple or companion, called Albert, who lived with him till his death, which happened thirteen months after, and who has recorded the last circumstances of his life. The saint discoursing with others, always treated himself as the most infamous of criminals, and deserving the worst of deaths; and that these were his real sentiments, appeared from that extreme severity which he exercised upon himself. He lay on the bare ground: though he fed on the coarsest fare and drank nothing but water, he was very sparing in the use of each; saying, sensuality was to be feared even in the most ordinary food. Prayer, divine contemplation, and manual labour, employed his whole time. It was at his work that he instructed his disciple in his maxims of penance and perfection, which he taught him the most effectually by his own example, though in many respects so much raised above the common, that it was fitter to be admired than imitated. He had the gift of miracles,

and that of prophecy. Seeing his end draw near, he received the sacraments from a priest of the neighbouring town of Chatillon, and died on the 10th of February, in 1157, on which day he is named in the Roman and other martyrologies.

Divine Providence moved one Renauld, a physician, to join Albert, a little before the death of the saint. They buried St. William's body in his little garden, and studied to live according to his maxims and example. Some time after, their number increasing, they built a chapel over their founder's grave, with a little hermitage. This was the origin of the Gulielmites, or Hermits of St. William, spread in the next age over Italy, France, Flanders, and Germany. They went barefoot, and their fasts were almost continual: but pope Gregory IX. mitigated their austerities, and gave them the rule of St. Benedict, which they still observe. The order is now become a congregation united to the hermits of St. Austin, except twelve houses in the Low Countries, which still retain the rule of the Gulielmites, which is that of St. Benedict, with a white habit like that of the Cistercians.[1]

1 Villefore confounds this saint with St. William, founder of the hermits of Monte Virgine in the kingdom of Naples, who lived in great repute with king Roger, and is commemorated in the Roman Martyrology, June 25. Others confound him with St. William, duke of Aquitain, a monk of Gellone. He was a great general, and often vanquished the Saracens who invaded Languedoc. In recompense, Charlemagne made him duke or governor of Aquitain, and appointed Toulouse for his residence. Some years after in 806, having obtained the consent of his duchess, (who also renounced the world) and of Charlemagne, though with great difficulty, he made his monastic profession at Gellone, a monastery which he had founded in a valley of that name, a league distant from Aniane, in the diocess of Lodeve. St. William received the habit at the hands of St. Benedict of Aniane, was directed by him in the exercises of a religious life, and sanctified himself with great fervour, embracing the most humbling and laborious employments, and practising extraordinary austerities, till his happy death in 812, on the 28th of May, on which day his festival is kept in the monastery of Gellone, (now called St. Guillem du Desert, founded by this saint in 804,) and in the neighbouring churches. See, on him, Mabillon. Many also have confounded our saint with William the last duke of Guienne, who, after a licentious youth, and having been an abettor of the anti-pope, Peter Leonis, was wonderfully

The feast of St. William is kept at Paris in the abbey of Blancs-Manteaux, so called from certain religious men for whom it was founded, who wore white cloaks and were of a mendicant Order, called of the Servants of the Virgin Mary; founded at Marseilles, and approved by Alexander IV. in 1257. This order being extinguished, by virtue of the decree of the second council of Lyons, in 1274, by which all mendicants, except the four great Orders of Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, and Austin friars, were abolished, this monastery was bestowed on the Gulielmites, who removed hither from Montrouge near Paris, in 1297. The prior and monks embraced the Order of St. Bennet, and the reformation of the Congregation of St. Vanne of Verdun, soon after called in France, of St. Maur, in 1618, and this is in order the fifth house of that Congregation in France, before the abbeys of St. Germain-des-Prez, and St. Denys.

ST. ERLULPH, BISHOP AND MARTYR.

SEVERAL Scottish missionaries passed into the North-western parts of Germany, to sow there the seeds of the faith, at the time when Charlemagne subdued the Saxons. In imitation of these apostolic men, Saint Erlulph, an holy Scotchman, went thither, and after employing many years with great success in that arduous mission, was chosen the tenth bishop of Verdun. His zeal in propagating the faith enraged the barbarous infidels, and he was slain by them at a place called Eppokstorp, in 830. See Krantzius.[1]

converted by St. Bernard, sent to him by pope Innocent II. in the year 1135. The year following he renounced his estates, which his eldest daughter brought in marriage to Lewis the Young, king of France; and clothed with hair-cloth next his skin, and in a tattered garment expressive of the sincerity of his repentance and contrition, undertook a pilgrimage to Compostella, and died in that journey, in 1137. See Ordericus Vitalis, Hist. Norman.

1 This saint must not be confounded with Ernulph, a most holy man, the apostle of Iceland, who flourished in the year 890; on whom see Jonas, Histor. Islandiæ

FEBRUARY XI.

SS. SATURNINUS, DATIVUS,

AND MANY OTHER MARTYRS, OF AFRICA.

From their contemporary acts; Bollandus and Ruinart give them genuine.

A. D. 304.

The emperor Dioclesian had commanded all Christians under pain of death to deliver up the holy scriptures to be burnt. This persecution had raged a whole year in Africa; some had betrayed the cause of religion, but many more had defended it with their blood, when these saints were apprehended. Abitina, a city of the proconsular province of Africa, was the theatre of their triumph. Saturninus, priest of that city, celebrated the divine mysteries on a Sunday, in the house of Octavius Felix. The magistrates having notice of it, came with a troop of soldiers, and seized forty-nine persons of both sexes. The principal among them were the priest Saturninus, with his four children, viz. young Saturninus and Felix, both Lectors, Mary, who had consecrated her virginity to God, and Hilarianus, yet a child; also Dativus, a noble senator, Ampelius, Rogatianus, and Victoria. Dativus, the ornament of the senate of Abitina, whom God destined to be one of the principal senators of heaven, marched at the head of this holy troop. Saturninus walked by his side, surrounded by his illustrious family. The others followed in silence. Being brought before the magistrates, they confessed Jesus Christ so resolutely, that their very judges applauded their courage, which repaired the infamous sacrilege committed there a little before by Fundanus, the bishop of Abitina, who in that same place had given up to the magistrates the

sacred books to be burnt: but a violent shower suddenly falling, put out the fire, and a prodigious hail ravaged the whole country.

The confessors were shackled and sent to Carthage, the residence of the proconsul. They rejoiced to see themselves in chains for Christ, and sung hymns and canticles during their whole journey to Carthage, praising and thanking God. The proconsul, Anulinus, addressing himself first to Dativus, asked him of what condition he was, and if he had assisted at the collect or assembly of the Christians. He answered, that he was a Christian, and had been present at it. The proconsul bid him discover who presided, and in whose house those religious assemblies were held: but without waiting for his answer, commanded him to be put on the rack and torn with iron hooks, to oblige him to a discovery. They underwent severally the tortures of the rack, iron hooks, and cudgels. The weaker sex fought no less gloriously, particularly the illustrious Victoria; who, being converted to Christ in her tender years, had signified a desire of leading a single life, which her pagan parents would not agree to, having promised her in marriage to a rich young nobleman. Victoria, on the day appointed for the wedding, full of confidence in the protection of Him, whom she had chosen for the only spouse of her soul, leaped out of a window, and was miraculously preserved from hurt. Having made her escape, she took shelter in a church; after which she consecrated her virginity to God, with the ceremonies then used on such occasions at Carthage, in Italy, Gaul, and all over the West.[1] To the crown of virginity, she earnestly desired to join

1 These were, by laying her head on the altar to offer it to God, and all her life after wearing her hair long, as the ancient Nazarens did: (Act. p. 417. St. Optatus, l. 6. S. Ambr. ad Virg. c. 8.) Whereas the ceremony of this consecration in Egypt and Syria was for the virgin to cut off her hair in the presence of a priest. (Bulteau, Hist. Mon p. 170.)

that of martyrdom. The proconsul, on account of her quality, and for the sake of her brother, a Pagan, tried all means to prevail with her to renounce her faith. He inquired what was her religion. Her answer was, "I am a Christian." Her brother Fortunatianus undertook her defence, and endeavoured to prove her lunatic. The saint, fearing his plea might be the means of her losing the crown of martyrdom, made it appear by her wise confutations of it, that she was in her perfect senses, and protested that she had not been brought over to Christianity against her will. The proconsul asked her if she would return with her brother. She said, "She could not, being a Christian, and acknowledging none as brethren but those who kept the law of God." The proconsul then laid aside the quality of judge to become her humble suppliant, and entreated her not to throw away her life. But she rejected his entreaties with disdain, and said to him, "I have already told you my mind. I am a Christian, and I assisted at the collect." Anulinus, provoked at this constancy, reassumed his rage, and ordered her to prison with the rest to wait the sentence of death which he not long after pronounced upon them all.

The proconsul would yet try to gain Hilarianus, Saturninus's youngest son, not doubting to vanquish one of his tender age. But the child showed more contempt than fear of the tyrant's threats, and answered his interrogatories, "I am a Christian: I have been at the collect, and it was of my own voluntary choice, without any compulsion." The proconsul threatened him with those little punishments with which children are accustomed to be chastised, little knowing that God himself fights in his martyrs. The child only laughed at him. The governor then said to him, "I will cut off your nose and ears." Hilarianus replied, "You may do it; but I am a

Christian." The proconsul, dissembling his confusion, ordered him to prison. Upon which the child said, "Lord, I give thee thanks." These martyrs ended their lives under the hardships of their confinement, and are honoured in the ancient calendar of Carthage, and the Roman Martyrology, on the 11th of February, though only two (of the name of Felix) died on that day of their wounds.

The example of these martyrs condemns the sloth with which many Christians in this age celebrate the Lord's Day. When the judge asked them, how they durst presume to hold their assembly against the imperial orders, they always repeated, even on the rack, "The obligation of the Sunday is indispensable. It is not lawful for us to omit the duty of that day. We celebrated it as well as we could. We never passed a Sunday without meeting at our assembly. We will keep the commandments of God at the expense of our lives." No dangers nor torments could deter them from this duty. A rare example of fervour in keeping that holy precept, from which too many, upon lame pretences, seek to excuse themselves. As the Jew was known by the religious observance of the Sabbath, so is the true Christian by his manner of celebrating the Sunday. And as our law is more holy and more perfect than the Jewish, so must be our manner of sanctifying the Lord's Day. This is the proof of our religion, and of our piety towards God. The primitive Christians kept this day in the most holy manner, assembling to public prayer, in dens and caves, knowing that, "without this religious observance, a man cannot be a Christian," to use the expression of an ancient father.

SAINT SEVERINUS, ABBOT OF AGAUNUM.

From his ancient short life, in Mabillon App. Sæc. 1. Ben.

A. D. 507.

St. Severinus, of a noble family in Burgundy, was educated in the catholic faith, at a time when the Arian heresy reigned in that country. He forsook the world in his youth, and dedicated himself to God in the monastery of Agaunum, which then only consisted of scattered cells, till the catholic king Sigismund, son and successor to the Arian Gondebald, who then reigned in Burgundy, built there the great abbey of St. Maurice. St. Severinus was the holy abbot of that place, and had governed his community many years in the exercises of penance and charity, when, in 504, Clovis, the first Christian king of France, lying ill of a fever, which his physicians had for two years ineffectually endeavoured to remove, sent his chamberlain to conduct him to court; for he heard how the sick from all parts recovered their health by his prayers. St. Severinus took leave of his monks, telling them he should never see them more in this world. On his journey he healed Eulalius, bishop of Nevers, who had been for some time deaf and dumb, also a leper, at the gates of Paris; and coming to the palace, he immediately restored the king to perfect health, by putting on him his own cloak. The king in gratitude distributed large alms to the poor, and released all his prisoners. St. Severinus returning towards Agaunum, stopped at Chateau-Landon, in Gatinois, where two priests served God in a solitary chapel, among whom he was admitted, at his request, as a stranger, and was soon greatly admired by them for his sanctity. He foresaw his

death, which happened shortly after, in 507. The place is now an abbey of reformed canons regular of St. Austin. The Hugonots scattered the greatest part of his relics, when they plundered this church. He is mentioned in the Roman Martyrology, and a large parish in Paris takes its name from this saint, not from the hermit who was St. Cloud's master.[1]

THE EMPRESS THEODORA,

WHOM THE GREEKS RANK AMONG THE SAINTS.

By her mildness and patience she often softened the cruel temper of her brutish husband, Theophilus, and protected the defenders of holy images from the fury of his persecution. Being left by his death regent of the empire during the minority of her son, Michael III., she put an end to the Iconoclast heresy, one hundred and twenty years after the first establishment of it by Leo the Isaurian: and the patriarch Methodius with great solemnity restored holy images in the great church in Constantinople, on the first Sunday of Lent, which we call the second, of which event the Greeks make an annual commemoration, calling it the feast of Orthodoxy. After she had governed the empire with great glory twelve years, she was banished by her unnatural son and his impious uncle Bardas. She prepared herself for death by spending the last eight years of her life in a monastery, where she gave up her soul to God in 867. She is ranked among the saints in the Menology of the emperor Basil, in the Menæa, and other calendars of the Greeks. See the compilations of Bollandus from the authors of the Byzantine history.

1 See Le Bœuf, Hist. du Diocese de Paris, t. 1. p. 151. 157. and Le Fevie, Calend. Hist. de Paris, p. 49.

FEBRUARY XII.

ST. BENEDICT, OF ANIAN, ABBOT.

From his life wrote with great piety, gravity, and erudition by St. Ardo Smaragdus, his disciple. He is not to be confounded with Smaragdus, abbot in the diocess of Verdun, author of a commentary on the rule of St. Bennet.

A. D. 821.

He was son of Aigulf, count or governor of Languedoc, and served king Pepin and his son Charlemagne in quality of cupbearer, enjoying under them great honours and possessions. Grace made him sensible of the vanity of all perishable goods, and at twenty years of age he took a resolution of seeking the kingdom of God with his whole heart. From that time he led a most mortified life in the court itself for three years, eating very sparingly and of the coarsest fare, allowing himself very little sleep, and mortifying all his senses. In 774, having narrowly escaped being drowned in the Tesin, near Pavia, in endeavouring to save his brother, he made a vow to quit the world entirely. Returning to Languedoc, he was confirmed in his resolution by the pious advice of a hermit of great merit and virtue, called Widmar; and under a pretext of going to the court at Aix la Chapelle, he went to the abbey of St. Seine, five leagues from Dijon, and having sent back all his attendants, became a monk there. He spent two years and a half in wonderful abstinence, treating his body as a furious wild beast, to which he would show no other mercy than barely not to kill it. He took no other sustenance on any account but bread and water; and when overcome with weariness, he allowed himself nothing softer than the bare ground where-

on to take a short rest; thus making even his repose a continuation of penance. He frequently passed the whole night in prayer, and stood barefoot on the ground in the sharpest cold. He studied to make himself contemptible by all manner of humiliations, and received all insults with joy, so perfectly was he dead to himself. God bestowed on him an extraordinary spirit of compunction, and the gift of tears, with an infused knowledge of spiritual things to an eminent degree. Not content to fulfil the rule of St. Benedict in its full rigour, he practised all the severest observances, prescribed by the rules of St. Pachomius and St. Basil. Being made cellerist, he was very solicitous to provide for others whatever St. Benedict's rule allowed, and had a particular care of the poor and of the guests.

His brethren, upon the abbot's death, were disposed to choose our saint, but he, being unwilling so accept of the charge on account of their known aversion to a reformation, left them and returned to his own country, Languedoc, in 780, where he built a small hermitage near a chapel of St. Saturninus, on the brook Anian, near the river Eraud, upon his own estate. Here he lived some years in extreme poverty, praying continually that God would teach him to do his will, and make him faithfully correspond with his eternal designs. Some solitaries, and with them the holy man Widmar, put themselves under his direction, though he long excused himself. They earned their livelihood by their labour, and lived on bread and water, except on Sundays and solemn festivals, on which they added a little wine and milk when it was given them in alms. The holy superior did not exempt himself from working with the rest in the fields, either carrying wood or ploughing; and sometimes he copied good books. The number of his disciples increasing, he quitted the valley, and built a

monastery in a more spacious place, in that neighbourhood. He showed his love of poverty by his rigorous practice of it: for he long used wooden, and afterward glass or pewter chalices at the altar; and if any presents of silk ornaments were made him, he gave them to other churches. However, he some time after changed his way of thinking with respect to the church; built a cloister, and a stately church adorned with marble pillars, furnished it with silver chalices, and rich ornaments, and bought a great number of books. He had in a short time three hundred religious under his direction, and also exercised a general inspection over all the monasteries of Provence, Languedoc, and Gascony, which respected him as their common parent and master. At last he remitted something in the austerities of the reformation he had introduced among them. Felix, bishop of Urgel had advanced that Christ was not the natural, but only the adoptive son of the eternal Father. St. Benedict most learnedly opposed this heresy, and assisted in 794 at the council assembled against it at Francfort. He employed his pen to confute the same, in four treatises, published in the miscellanies of Balusius.

Benedict was become the oracle of the whole kingdom, and he established his reformation in many great monasteries with little or no opposition. His most illustrious colony was the monastery of Gellone, founded in 804, by William, duke of Aquitain, who retired into it himself, whence it was called St. Guillem du Desert. By the councils held under Charlemagne, in 813, and by the Capitulars of that prince, published the same year, it was ordained that the canons should live according to the canons and laws of the church, and the monks according to the rule of St. Bennet: by which regulation an uniformity was introduced in the monastic order in the

West. The emperor Lewis Debonnair, who succeeded his father on the 28th of January, 814, committed to the saint the inspection of all the abbeys in his kingdom. To have him nearer his own person, the emperor obliged him to live in the abbey of Marmunster, in Alsace; and as this was still too remote, desirous of his constant assistance in his councils, he built the monastery of Inde, two leagues from Aix-la-Chapelle, the residence of the emperor and court. Notwithstanding St. Benedict's constant abode in this monastery, he had still a hand in restoring monastic discipline throughout France and Germany; as he also was the chief instrument in drawing up the canons for the reformation of prebendaries and monks in the council of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 817, and presided in the assembly of abbots the same year, to enforce restoration of discipline. His statutes were adopted by the order, and annexed to the rule of St. Benedict, the founder. He wrote, whilst a private monk at Seine, the Code of Rules, being a collection of all the monastic regulations, which he found extant; as also a book of homilies for the use of monks, collected, according to the custom of that age, from the works of the fathers: likewise a Penitential, printed in the additions to the Capitulars. In his Concord of Rules he gives that of St. Bennet, with those of other patriarchs of the monastic order, to show their uniformity in the exercise which they prescribe.[1] This great restorer of the monastic order in the West, worn out at length with mortification and fatigues, suffered much from continual sickness the latter years of his life. He died at Inde with extraordinary tranquillity and cheerfulness on the 11th

1 See Codex Regularum, collectus a S. Benedicto Anianæ, auctus a Lucâ Holstenio, printed by Holstenius at Rome, in 1661. Also, Concordia Regularum, authore S. Benedicto Anianæ abbate, edita ab. Hug. Menardo Benedictino. Parisiis, 1638.

of February, 821, being then about seventy-one years of age, and was buried in the same monastery, since called St. Cornelius's, the church being dedicated to that holy pope and martyr. At Anian his festival is kept on the 11th, but by most other Martyrologies on the 12th of February, the day of his burial. His relics remain in the monastery of St. Cornelius, or of Inde, in the duchy of Cleves, and have been honoured with miracles.

St. Bennet, by the earnestness with which he set himself to study the spirit of his holy rule and state, gave a proof of the ardour with which he aspired to Christian perfection. The experienced masters of a spiritual life, and the holy legislators of monastic institutes, have in view the great principles of an interior life, which the gospel lays down: for in the exercises which they prescribe, powerful means are offered by which a soul may learn perfectly to die to herself, and be united in all her powers to God. This dying to, and profound annihilation of ourselves, is of such importance, that so long as a soul remains in this state, though all the devils in hell were leagued together, they can never hurt her. All their efforts will only make her sink more deeply in this feeling knowledge of herself, in which she finds her strength, her repose, and her joy, because by it she is prepared to receive the divine grace: and if self-love be destroyed, the devil can have no power over us; for he never makes any successful attacks upon us but by the secret intelligence which he holds with this domestic enemy. The crucifixion of the old man, and perfect disengagement of the heart, by the practice of universal self-denial, is absolutely necessary before a soul can ascend the mountain of the God of Jacob, on which his infinite majesty is seen separated from all creatures; as Blosius,[1] and all

1 Instit. Spir. c. 1. n. 6. &c.

other directors in the paths of an interior life, strongly inculcate.

ST. MELETIUS, PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH, C.

He was of one of the best families of Lesser Armenia, and born at Melitene, which Strabo and Pliny place in Cappadocia; but Ptolemy and all succeeding writers in Lesser Armenia, of which province it became the capital. The saint, in his youth, made fasting and mortification his choice, in the midst of every thing that could flatter the senses. His conduct was uniform and irreproachable, and the sweetness and affability of his temper gained him the confidence and esteem both of the Catholics and Arians; for he was a nobleman of charming simplicity and sincerity, and a great lover of peace. Eustathius, bishop of Sebaste, a semi-Arian, being deposed by the Arians in a council held at Constantinople, in 360, Meletius was promoted to that see; but meeting with too violent opposition, left it, and retired first into the desert, and afterward to the city of Berœa, in Syria, of which Socrates falsely supposes him to have been bishop. The patriarchal church of Antioch had been oppressed by the Arians, ever since the banishment of Eustathius, in 331. Several succeeding bishops, who were intruded into that chair, were infamous abettors of that hersey. Eudoxus, the last of these, had been removed from the see of Germanicia to that of Antioch, upon the death of Leontius, an Arian like himself, but was soon expelled by a party of Arians, in a sedition, and he shortly after usurped the see of Constantinople. Both the Arians and several Catholics agreed to raise St. Meletius to the patriarchal chair at Antioch, and the emperor ordered him to be put in possession of that dignity in 361; but

some among the Catholics refused to acknowledge him, regarding his election as irregular, on account of the share which the Arians had had in it. The Arians hoped that he would declare himself of their party, but were undeceived when the emperor Constantius arriving at Antioch, he was ordered, with certain other prelates, to explain in his presence that text of the Proverbs,[1] concerning the wisdom of God: *The Lord hath created me in the beginning of his ways.* George of Laodicea first explained it in an Arian sense, next Acacius of Cæsarea, in a sense bordering on that heresy: but the truth triumphed in the mouth of Meletius, who, speaking the third,[2] showed that this text is to be understood not of a strict creation, but of a new state or being, which the Eternal Wisdom received in his incarnation. This public testimony thunderstruck the Arians, and Eudoxus then the bishop of Constantinople, prevailed with the emperor to banish him into Lesser Armenia, thirty days after his installation. The Arians intruded the impious Euzoius into that see, who, formerly being deacon at Alexandria, had been deposed and expelled the church, with the priest and arch-heretic Arius, by St. Alexander, bishop of Alexandria. From this time is dated the famous schism of Antioch, in 360, though it drew its origin from the banishment of St. Eustathius about thirty years before. Many zealous Catholics always adhered to St. Eustathius, being convinced that his faith was the only cause of his unjust expulsion. But others, who were orthodox in their principles, made no scruple, at least for some time, to join communion in the great church with the intruded patriarchs; in which their conscience was more easily imposed upon, as, by the artifices of the Arians, the cause of

1 Prov. viii. 22. 2 S. Epiph. hær. 73. n. 29.

St. Eustathius appeared merely personal and secular, or at least mixed; and his two first short-lived successors, Eulalius and Euphronius, do not appear to have declared themselves Arians, otherwise than by their intrusion. Placillus the Third joined in condemning Saint Athanasius in the councils of Tyre in 335, and of Antioch, in 341. His successors, Stephen I., (who at Philippopolis opposed the council of Sardica,) Leontius, and Eudoxus, appeared every where leagued with the heads of the Arians. But the intrusion of Euzoius, with the expulsion of St. Meletius, rendered the necessity of an entire separation in communion more notorious; and many who were orthodox in their faith, yet, through weakness or ignorance of facts, had till then communicated with the Arians in the great church, would have no communion with Euzoius, or his adherents; but under the protection of Diodorus and Flavian, then eminent and learned laymen, afterward bishops, held their religious assemblies with their own priests, in the church of the apostles without the city, in a suburb called Palæa, that is, the old suburb or church. They attempted in vain to unite themselves to the Eustathians, who for thirty years past had held their separate assemblies; but these refused to admit them, or to allow the election of Meletius, on account of the share the Arians had had therein: they therefore continued their private assemblies within the city. The emperor Constantius, in his return from the Persian war, with an intention to march against his cousin Julian, Cæsar, in the west, arrived at Antioch, and was baptized by the Arian bishop Euzoius; but died soon after, in his march at Mopsucrêne, in Cilicia, on the third of November, 361. Julian, having allowed the banished bishops to go to their respective churches, St. Meletius returned to Antioch about the end of the year 362, but had

the affliction to see the breach made by the schism grow wider. The Eustathians not only refused still to receive him, but proceeded to choose a bishop for themselves. This was Paulinus, a person of great meekness and piety, who had been ordained priest by St. Eustathius himself, and had constantly attended his zealous flock. Lucifer, bishop of Cagliari, passing by Antioch in his return from exile, consecrated Paulinus bishop, and by this precipitate action, riveted the schism which divided this church near fourscore and five years, and in which the discussion of the facts upon which the right of the claimants was founded, was so intricate, that the saints innocently took part on both sides. It was an additional affliction to St. Meletius, to see Julian the Apostate make Antioch the seat of the superstitious abominations of idolatry, which he restored; and the generous liberty with which he opposed them, provoked that emperor to banish him a second time. But Jovian soon after succeeding that unhappy prince, in 363, our saint returned to Antioch. Then it appeared that the Arians were men entirely guided by ambition and interest, and that as nothing could be more insolent than they had shown themselves when backed by the temporal power, so nothing was more cringing and submissive, when they were deprived of that protection. For the emperor warmly embracing the Nicene faith, following in all ecclesiastical matters the advice of St. Athanasius, and expressing a particular regard for St. Meletius, the moderate Arians, with Acacius of Cæsarea, in Palestine, at their head, went to Antioch, where our saint held a council of twenty-seven bishops, and there subscribed an orthodox profession of faith. Jovian dying, after a reign of eight months, Valens became emperor of the East, who was at first very orthodox, but afterward, seduced by the persuasions of his wife,

he espoused the Arian heresy, and received baptism from Eudoxus, bishop of Constantinople, who made him promise upon oath to promote the cause of that sect. The cruel persecution which this prince raised against the church, and the favour which he showed not only to the Arians, but also to Pagans, Jews, and all that were not Catholics, deterred not St. Meletius from exerting his zeal in defence of the orthodox faith. This prince coming from Cæsarea, where he had been vanquished by the constancy of St. Basil, arrived at Antioch in April, 372, where he left nothing unattempted to draw Meletius over to the interest of his sect; but meeting with no success, ordered him a third time into banishment. The people rose tumultuously to detain him amongst them, and threw stones at the governor, who was carrying him off, so that he only escaped with his life by our saint's stepping between him and the mob, and covering him with his cloak. It is only in this manner that the disciples of Jesus Christ revenge injuries, as St. Chrysostom observes.[1] Hermant and Fleury suppose this to have happened at his first banishment. By the order of Valens, he was conducted into Lesser Armenia, where he made his own estate at Getasus, near Nicocopolis, the place of his residence. His flock at Antioch, by copying his humility, modesty, and patience, amidst the persecution which fell upon them, showed themselves the worthy disciples of so great a master. They were drove out of the city, and from the neighbouring mountains, and the banks of the river, where they attempted to hold their assemblies; some expired under torments, others were thrown into the Orontes. In the mean time, Valens allowed the pagans to renew their sacrifices, and to celebrate publicly the feasts of Ju-

1 Hom. in St. Melet. t. 2.

piter, Ceres, and Bacchus.[1] Sapor, king of Persia, having invaded Armenia, took by treachery king Arsaces, bound him in silver chains, (according to the Persian custom of treating royal prisoners,) and caused him to perish in prison. To check the progress of these ancient enemies of the empire, Valens sent an army toward Armenia, and marched himself to Edessa in Mesopotamia. Thus the persecution at Antioch was abated, to which the death of Valens put an end, who was burnt by the Goths in a cottage after his defeat near Adrianople, in 378. His nephew Gratian, who then became master of the East, went in all haste to Constantinople, by his general, Theodosius, vanquished the Goths, and by several edicts recalled the Catholic prelates, and restored the liberty of the church in the Eastern empire. St. Meletius upon his return, found that the schism had begun to engage distant churches in the division. Most of the Western prelates adhered to the election of Paulinus. St. Athanasius communicated with him, as he had always done with his friends the Eustathian Catholics, though, from the beginning, he disapproved of the precipitation of Lucifer of Cagliari in ordaining him, and he afterward communicated also with St. Meletius. St. Basil, St. Amphilochius of Iconium, St. Pelagius of Laodicea, St. Eusebius of Samosata, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Gregory of Nazianzum, St. Chrysostom, and the general council of Constantinople, with almost the unanimous suffrage of all the East, zealously supported the cause of St. Meletius. Theodosius having, after his victory over the Goths, been associated by Gratian, and taken possession of the Eastern empire, sent his general, Sapor, to Antioch, to re-establish there the Catholic pastors. In an assembly which was

1 Theod. l. 4. c. 23, 24. Sozom. l. 6. c. 17.

held in his presence, in 379, St. Meletius, Paulinus, and Vitalis, whom Apollinarius had consecrated bishop of his party there, met, and St. Meletius addressing himself to Paulinus, made the following proposal:[1] "Since our sheep have but one religion, and the same faith, let it be our business to unite them into one flock; let us drop all disputes for precedency, and agree to feed them together. I am ready to share this see with you, and let the survivor have the care of the whole flock." After some demur the proposal was accepted of, and Sapor put St. Meletius in possession of the churches which he had governed before his last banishment, and of those which were in the hands of the Arians, and Paulinus was continued in his care of the Eustathians. St. Meletius zealously reformed the disorders which heresy and divisions had produced, and provided his church with excellent ministers. In 379 he presided in a council at Antioch, in which the errors of Apollinarius were condemned without any mention of his name. Theodosius, whom Gratian declared Augustus, and his partner in the empire at Sirmich, on the 19th of January, soon after his arrival at Constantinople, concurred zealously in assembling the second general council which was opened at Constantinople, in the year 381. Only the prelates of the Eastern empire assisted, so that we find no mention of legates of pope Damasus, and it was general, not in the celebration, but by the acceptation of the universal church. St. Meletius presided as the first patriarch that was present: in it one hundred and fifty Catholic bishops and thirty-six of the Macedonian sect made their appearance; but all these latter chose rather to withdraw than to retract their error, or confess the divinity of the Holy Ghost. The council ap-

1 Socr. l. 5. c. 5. Sozom. l. 7. c. 3. Theodoret, l. 5. c. 23.

proved of the election of St. Gregory of Nazianzen to the see of Constantinople, though he resigned it to satisfy the scruples and complaints of some, who, by mistake, thought it made against the Nicene canon, which forbade translations of bishops; which could not be understood of him, who had never been allowed to take possession of his former see. The council then proceeded to condemn the Macedonian heresy, and to publish the Nicene creed, with certain additions. In the second, among the seven canons of discipline, the two oriental patriarchates of Alexandria and Antioch were acknowledged. In the third, the prerogative of honour, next to the see of Rome, is given to that of Constantinople, which before was subject to the metropolitan of Heraclea in Thrace. This canon laid the foundation of the patriarchal dignity to which that see was raised by the council of Calcedon, though not allowed for some time after in the West. St. Meletius died at Constantinople whilst the council was sitting, to the inexpressible grief of the fathers, and of the good emperor. By an evangelical meekness, which was his characteristic, he had converted the various trials that he had gone through into occasions of virtue, and had exceedingly endeared himself to all that had the happiness of his acquaintance. St. Chrysostom assures us, that his name was so venerable to his flock at Antioch, that they gave it their children, and mentioned it with all possible respect. They cut his image upon their seals, and upon their plate, and carved it in their houses. His funeral was performed at Constantinople with the utmost magnificence, and attended by the fathers of the council, and all the Catholics of the city. One of the most eminent among the prelates, probably Saint Amphilochius of Iconium, pronounced his panegyric in the council. St. Gregory of Nyssa made his funeral oration in

presence of the emperor in the great church, in the end of which he says, "He now sees God face to face, and prays for us, and for the ignorance of the people." St. Meletius's body was deposited in the church of the apostles, till it was removed before the end of the same year, with the utmost pomp, to Antioch, at the emperor's expense, and interred near the relics of Saint Babylas, in the church which he had erected in honour of that holy Martyr. Five years after, Saint Chrysostom, whom our Saint had ordained deacon, spoke his elegant panegyric on the 12th of February, on which his name occurs in the Menæa, and was inserted by Baronius in the Roman Martyrology; though it is uncertain whether this be the day of his death, or of his translation to Antioch. On account of his three banishments and great sufferings, he is styled a martyr by St. John Damascen.[1] His panegyrics, by St. Gregory of Nyssa and Chrysostom, are extant. See also Socrates.

ST. EULALIA, OF BARCELONA, V. M.

This holy virgin was brought up in the faith, and in the practice of piety, at Barcelona in Spain. In the persecution of Dioclesian, under the cruel governor Dacian, she suffered the rack, and being at last crucified on it, joined the crown of martyrdom with that of virginity. Her relics are preserved at Barcelona, by which city she is honoured as its special patroness. She is titular saint of many churches, and her name is given to several villages of Guienne and Languedoc and other neighbouring provinces.

1 Or. 2. de Imagin.

ST. ANTONY CAULEAS, CONFESSOR.

PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

He was by extraction of a noble Phrygian family, but born at a country seat near Constantinople, where his parents lived retired for fear of the persecution and infection of the Iconoclasts. From twelve years of age he served God with great fervour in a monastery of the city, which some moderns pretend to have been that of Studius. In process of time he was chosen abbot, and, upon the death of Stephen, brother to the emperor Leo VI., surnamed the Wise, or the Philosopher, patriarch of Constantinople in 893. His predecessor had succeeded Photius in 886, (whom this emperor expelled,) and laboured strenuously to extinguish the schism he had formed, and restore the peace of the church over all the East. St. Antony completed this great work, and in a council in which he presided at Constantinople, condemned or reformed all that had been done by Photius during his last usurpation of that see, after the death of St. Ignatius. The acts of this important council are entirely lost, perhaps through the malice of those Greeks who renewed this unhappy schism. A perfect spirit of mortification, penance, and prayer, sanctified this great pastor, both in his private and public life. He died in the year 896, of his age sixty-seven, on the 12th of February, on which day his name is inserted in the Greek Menæa, and in the Roman Martyrology. See an historical panegyric on his virtues, in the Bollandists.

FEBRUARY XIII.

ST. CATHERINE DE RICCI,[1] V. O. S. D.

A. D. 1589.

The Ricci are an ancient family, which still subsists in a flourishing condition in Tuscany. Peter de Ricci, the father of our saint, was married to Catharine Bonza, a lady of suitable birth. The saint was born at Florence in 1522, and called at her baptism Alexandrina: but she took the name of Catharine at her religious profession. Having lost her mother in her infancy, she was formed to virtue by a very pious godmother, and whenever she was missing she was always to be found on her knees in some secret part of the house. When she was between six and seven years old, her father placed her in the convent of Monticelli, near the gates of Florence, where her aunt Louisa de Ricci, was a nun. This place was to her a paradise: at a distance from the noise and tumult of the world, she served God without impediment or distraction. After some years her father took her home. She continued her usual exercises in the world as much as she was able; but the interruptions and dissipation, inseparable from her station, gave her so much uneasiness, that with the consent of her father, which she obtained, though with great difficulty, in the year 1535, the fourteenth of her age, she

1 See her life, written by F. Seraphin Razzi, a Dominican friar, who knew her, and was fifty-eight years old when she died. The nuns of her monastery gave an ample testimony that this account was conformable partly to what they knew of her, and partly to MS. memorials left by her confessor and others concerning her. Whence F. Echard calls this life a work accurately wrote. It was printed in 4to. at Lucca, in 1594. Her life was again compiled by F. Philip Guidi, confessor to the saint and to the duchess of Urbino, and printed at Florence, in two vols. 4to. in 1622. FF. Michael Pio and John Lopez, of the same order, have given abstracts of her life. See likewise Bened. XIV. de Can. Serv. Dei. t. 5. inter Act. Can. 5. SS. Append.

received the religious veil in the convent of Dominicanesses at Prat, in Tuscany, to which her uncle, F. Timothy de Ricci, was director. God, in the merciful design to make her the spouse of his crucified Son, and to imprint in her soul dispositions conformable to his, was pleased to exercise her patience by rigorous trials. For two years she suffered inexpressible pains under a complication of violent distempers, which remedies themselves served only to increase. These sufferings she sanctified by the interior dispositions with which she bore them, and which she nourished principally by assiduous meditation on the passion of Christ, in which she found an incredible relish, and a solid comfort and joy. After the recovery of her health, which seemed miraculous, she studied more perfectly to die to her senses, and to advance in a penitential life and spirit, in which God had begun to conduct her, by practising the greatest austerities which were compatible with the obedience she had professed: she fasted two or three days a week on bread and water, and sometimes passed the whole day without taking any nourishment, and chastised her body with disciplines and a sharp iron chain which she wore next her skin. Her obedience, humility, and meekness, were still more admirable than her spirit of penance. The least shadow of distinction or commendation gave her inexpressible uneasiness and confusion, and she would have rejoiced to be able to lie hid in the centre of the earth, in order to be entirely unknown to, and blotted out of the hearts of all mankind, such were the sentiments of annihilation and contempt of herself in which she constantly lived. It was by profound humility and perfect interior self-denial that she learned to vanquish in her heart the sentiments or life of the first Adam, that is, of corruption, sin, and inordinate self-love. But this victory over herself, and pur-

gation of her affections, was completed by a perfect spirit of prayer: for by the union of her soul with God, and the establishment of the absolute reign of his love in her heart, she was dead to, and disengaged from all earthly things. And in one act of sublime prayer, she advanced more than by a hundred exterior practices in the purity and ardour of her desire to do constantly what was most agreeable to God, to lose no occasion of practising every heroic virtue, and of vigorously resisting all that was evil. Prayer, holy meditation, and contemplation were the means by which God imprinted in her soul sublime ideas of his heavenly truths, the strongest and most tender sentiments of all virtues, and the most burning desire to give all to God, with an incredible relish and affection for suffering contempt and poverty for Christ. What she chiefly laboured to obtain, by meditating on his life and sufferings, and what she most earnestly asked of him was, that he would be pleased, in his mercy, to purge her affections of all poison of the inordinate love of creatures, and engrave in her his most holy and divine image, both exterior and interior, that is to say, both in her conversation and affections, that so she might be animated, and might think, speak, and act by his most holy Spirit. The saint was chosen, very young, first, mistress of the novices, then sub-prioress, and, in the twenty-fifth year of her age, was appointed perpetual prioress. The reputation of her extraordinary sanctity and prudence drew her many visits from a great number of bishops, princes, and cardinals, among others, of Cervini, Alexander of Medicis, and Aldobrandini, who all three were afterward raised to St. Peter's chair, under the names of Marcellus II., Clement VIII., and Leo XI. Something like what St. Austin relates of St. John of Egypt, happened to St. Philip Neri and St. Catharine of Ricci. For having some time

entertained together a commerce of letters, to satisfy their mutual desire of seeing each other, whilst he was detained at Rome she appeared to him in a vision, and they conversed together a considerable time, each doubtless being in a rapture. This St. Philip Neri, though most circumspect in giving credit to, or in publishing visions, declared, saying, that Catharine de Ricci, whilst living, had appeared to him in vision, as his disciple Galloni assures us in his life.[1] And the continuators of Bollandus inform us that this was confirmed by the oaths of five witnesses.[2] Bacci, in his life of Saint Philip, mentions the same thing, and pope Gregory XV., in his bull for the canonization of St. Philip Neri, affirms, that whilst this saint lived at Rome, he conversed a considerable time with Catharine of Ricci, a nun, who was then at Prat, in Tuscany.[3] Most wonderful were the raptures of St. Catharine in meditating on the passion of Christ, which was her daily exercise, but to which she totally devoted herself every week from Thursday noon to three o'clock in the afternoon on Friday. After a long illness, she passed from this mortal life to everlasting bliss and the possession of the object of all her desires, on the feast of the Purification of our Lady, on the 2nd of February, in 1589, the sixty-seventh year of her age. The ceremony of her beatification was performed by Clement XII. in 1732, and that of her canonization by Benedict XIV. in 1746. Her festival is deferred to the 13th of February.

In the most perfect state of heavenly contemplation which this life admits of, there must be a time allowed for action, as appears from the most eminent contemplatives among the saints, and those religious institutes which are most devoted

1 Gallon. apud Contin. Bolland. Acta. Sanctorum, Maii, t. 6. p. 503 col. 2. n. 146.

2 Ibid p. 504. col. 2. 3 In Bullar. Cherubini, t. 4. p. 8.

to this holy exercise. The mind of man must be frequently unbent, or it will be overset. Many, by a too constant or forced attention, have lost their senses. The body also stands in need of exercise, and in all stations men owe several exterior duties both to others and themselves, and to neglect any of these, upon pretence of giving the preference to prayer, would be a false devotion and dangerous illusion. Though a Christian be a citizen of heaven, whilst he is a sojourner in this world, he is not to forget the obligations or the necessities to which this state subjects him, or to dream of flights which only angels and their fellow inhabitants of bliss take. As a life altogether taken up in action and business, without frequent prayer and pious meditation, alienates a soul from God and virtue, and weds her totally to the world, so a life spent wholly in contemplation, without any mixture of action, is chimerical, and the attempt dangerous. The art of true devotion consists very much in a familiar and easy habit of accompanying exterior actions and business with a pious attention to the Divine Presence, frequent secret aspirations, and a constant union of the soul with God. This St. Catharine of Ricci practised at her work, in the exterior duties of her house and office, in her attendance on the sick (which was her favourite employment, and which she usually performed on her knees) and in the tender care of the poor over the whole country. But this hindered not the exercises of contemplation, which were her most assiduous employment. Hence retirement and silence were her delight, in order to entertain herself with the Creator of all things, and by devout meditation, kindling in her soul the fire of heavenly love, she was never able to satiate the ardour of her desire in adoring and praising the immense greatness and goodness of God.

ST. LICINIUS, CONFESSOR,

CALLED BY THE FRENCH LESIN, BISHOP OF ANGERS.

He was born of a noble family, allied to the kings of France about the year 540. He was applied to learning as soon as he was capable of instruction, and sent to the court of king Clotaire I. (whose cousin he was) being about 20 years of age. He signalized himself by his prudence and valour, both in the court and in the army, and acquitted himself of all christian duties with extraordinary exactitude and fervour. Fasting and prayer were familiar to him, and his heart was always raised to God. King Chilperic made him count or governor of Anjou, and being overcome by the importunities of his friends, the saint consented to take a wife about the year 578. But the lady was struck with a leprosy on the morning before it was to be solemnized. This accident so strongly affected Licinius, that he resolved to carry into immediate execution a design he had long entertained of entirely renouncing the world. This he did in 580, and leaving all things to follow Jesus Christ, he entered himself among the clergy, and hiding himself from the world in a community of ecclesiastics, found no pleasure but in the exercises of piety and the most austere penance, and in meditating on the holy scriptures. Audouin, the fourteenth bishop of Angers, dying towards the year 600, the people remembering the equity and mildness with which Licinius had governed them, rather as their father than as a judge or master, demanded him for their pastor. The voice of the clergy seconded that of the people, and the concurrence of the court of Clotaire II. in his minority, under the regency of his mother Fredegonda, overcame all the opposition his humility could make. His time

and his substance were divided in feeding the hungry, comforting and releasing prisoners, and curing the bodies and souls of his people. Though he was careful to keep up exact discipline in his diocess, he was more inclined to indulgence than rigour, in imitation of the tenderness which Jesus Christ showed for sinners. Strong and persuasive eloquence, the more forcible argument of his severe and exemplary life, and God himself speaking by miracles, qualified him to gain the hearts of the most hardened, and make daily conquests of souls to Christ. He renewed the spirit of devotion and penance by frequent retreats, and desired earnestly to resign his bishopric, and hide himself in some solitude: but the bishops of the province, whose consent he asked, refusing to listen to such a proposal, he submitted, and continued to spend the remainder of his life in the service of his flock. His patience was perfected by continual infirmities in his last years, and he finished his sacrifice about the year 618, in the sixty-fifth of his age. He was buried in the church of St. John Baptist, which he had founded, with a monastery, which he designed for his retreat.

It is now a collegiate church, and enriched with the treasure of his relics. His memory was publicly honoured in the seventh age: the 1st of November was the day of his festival, though he is now mentioned in the Roman Martyrology on the 13th of February. At Angers he is commemorated on the 8th of June, which seems to have been the day of his consecration, and on the 21st of June, when his relics were translated or taken up, 1169, in the time of Henry II. king of England, count of Anjou. See his life, wrote from the relation of his disciples soon after his death; and again by Marbodius, archdeacon of Angers, afterward bishop of Rennes, both in Bollandus.

ST. POLYEUCTUS, M.

The city of Melitine, a station of the Roman troops in the Lesser Armenia, is illustrious for a great number of martyrs, whereof the first in rank is Polyeuctus. He was a rich Roman officer, and had a friend called Nearchus, a zealous Christian, who when the news of the persecution raised by

the emperor against the church, reached Armenia, prepared himself to lay down his life for his faith; and grieving to leave Polyeuctus in the darkness of Paganism, was so successful in his endeavours to induce him to embrace Christianity, as not only to gain him over to the faith, but to inspire him with an eager desire of laying down his life for the same. He openly declared himself a Christian, and was apprehended and condemned to cruel tortures. The executioners being weary with tormenting him, betook themselves to the method of argument and persuasion in order to prevail with him to renounce Christ. The tears and cries of his wife Paulina, of his children, and of his father-in-law, Felix, were sufficient to have shaken a mind not superior to all the assaults of hell. But Polyeuctus, strengthened by God, grew only the firmer in his faith, and received the sentence of death with such cheerfulness and joy, and exhorted all to renounce their idols with so much energy, on the road to execution, that many were converted. He was beheaded on the 10th of January, in the persecution of Decius, or Valerian, about the year 250 or 257. The Christians buried his body in the city. Nearchus gathered his blood in a cloth, and afterward wrote his acts. The Greeks keep his festival very solemnly: and all the Latin martyrologies mention him.

There was in Melitine a famous Church of St. Polyeuctus, in the fourth age, in which St. Euthymius often prayed. There was also a very stately one in Constantinople, under Justinian, the vault of which was covered with plates of gold, in which it was the custom for men to make their most solemn oaths, as is related by St. Gregory of Tours. (De Glor. Mart. c. 103.) The same author informs us, in his history of the Franks, (Hist. l. 7. c. 6.) that the kings of France of the first race used to confirm their treaties by the name of Polyeuctus. The martyrology ascribed to Saint Jerom, and the most ancient Armenian calendars, place his feast on the 7th of January, which seems to have been the day of his martyrdom. The Greeks defer his festival to the 9th of January: but it is marked on the 13th of February in the ancient martyrology, which was sent from Rome to Aquileia in the eighth century, and which is copied by Ado, Usuard, and the Roman Martyrology.

ST. GREGORY, II. POPE, C.

He was born in Rome, to an affluent fortune, and being educated in the palace of the popes, acquired great skill in the holy scriptures and in ecclesiastical affairs, and attained to an eminent degree of sanctity. Pope Sergius I. to whom he was very dear, ordained him subdeacon. Under the succeeding popes, John the sixth and seventh, Sisinnius, and Constantine, he was treasurer of the church, and afterward library keeper, and was charged with several important commissions. The fifth general council had been held upon the affair of the three chapters, in 553, in the reign of Justinian, and the sixth against the Monothelites, in those of Constantine Pogonatus and Pope Agatho, in 660. With a view of adding a supplement of new canons to those of the aforesaid two councils, the bishops of the Greek church, to the number of two hundred and eleven, held the council called Quini-sext, in a hall of the imperial palace at Constantinople, named Trullus, in 692, which laid a foundation of certain differences in discipline between the Eastern and Western churches; for in the thirteenth canon it was enacted, that a man who was before married should be allowed to receive the holy orders of subdeacon, deacon, or priest, without being obliged to leave his wife, though this was forbid to bishops. (can. 12.) It was also forbid (can. 55.) to fast on Saturdays, even in Lent. Pope Sergius I. refused to confirm this council; and, in 695, the emperor Justinian II. surnamed Rhinotmetus, who had succeeded his father, Constantine Pogonatus, in 685, was dethroned for his cruelty, and his nose being slit, (from which circumstance he received his surname,) banished into Chersoneus. First Leontius, then Apsimarus Tiberius ascended the throne; but Justinian recovered it in 705, and invited pope Constantine into the East, hoping to

prevail upon him to confirm the council in Trullo. The pope was received with great honour, and had with him our saint, who, in his name, answered the questions put by the Greeks concerning the said council. After their return to Rome, upon the death of Constantine, Gregory was chosen pope, and ordained on the 19th of May, 715. The emperor Justinian being detested both by the army and people, Bardanes, who took the name of Philippicus, an Armenian, one of his generals, revolted, took Constantinople, put him and his son Tiberius, only seven years old, to death, and usurped the sovereignty in December, 711. In Justinian II. was extinguished the family of Heraclius. Philippicus abetted warmly the heresy of the Monothelites, and caused the sixth council to be prescribed in a pretended synod at Constantinople. His reign was very short; for Artemius, his secretary, who took the name of Anastasius II., deposed him, and stepped into the throne on the fourth of June, 713. By him the Monothelites were expelled; but, after a reign of two years and seven months, seeing one Theodosius chosen emperor by the army which had revolted in January, 716, he withdrew and took the monastic habit at Thessalonica. The eastern army having proclaimed Leo III., surnamed the Isaurian, emperor on the 25th of March, 717, Theodosius and his son embraced an ecclesiastical state, and lived in peace among the clergy. Pope Gregory signalized the beginning of his popedom by deposing John VI. the Monothelite, false patriarch of Constantinople, who had been nominated by Philippicus, and he promoted the election of St. Germanus, who was translated to that dignity from Cyzicus, in 715. With unwearied watchfulness and zeal he laid himself out in extirpating heresies on all sides, and in settling a reformation of manners. Besides a hospital for old men, he rebuilt the great monastery near

the church of St. Paul at Rome, and after the death of his mother in 718, changed her house into the monastery of St. Agatha. The same year he re-established the abbey of Mount Cassino, sending thither, from Rome, the holy abbot St. Petronax to take upon him the government, one hundred and forty years after it had been laid in ruins by the Lombards. This holy abbot lived to see monastic discipline settled here in so flourishing a manner, that in the same century Carloman, duke or prince of the French, Rachis, king of the Lombards, St. Willebald, St. Sturmius, first abbot of Fulda, and other eminent persons, fled to this sanctuary.[1] Our holy pope commissioned zealous missionaries to preach the faith in Germany, and consecrated St. Corbinian bishop of Frisingen, and St. Boniface bishop of Mentz. Leo the Isaurian protected the catholic church during the first ten years of his reign, and St. Gregory II. laid up among the archives of his church several letters which he had received from him, from the year 717 to 726, which proved afterward authentic monuments of his perfidy. For being infatuated by certain Jews, who had gained an ascendant over him by certain pretended astrological predictions, in 726 he commanded holy images to be abolished, and enforced the execution of his edicts of a cruel persecution. St. Germanus, and other orthodox prelates in the East, endeavoured to reclaim him, refused to obey his edicts, and addressed themselves to pope Gregory. Our saint employed long the arms of tears and entreaties; yet strenuously maintained the people of Italy in their allegiance to their prince, as Anastasius assures us. A rebellion was raised in Sicily, but soon quelled by the death of Artemius, who had assumed the purple. The pope vigorously opposed the mutineers, both here and in other parts of the West. When he was

1 Bulteau, Hist. Mon. d'Occid. t. 2. l. 4. c. 2. p. 8.

informed that the army at Ravenna and Venice, making zeal a pretence for rebellion, had created a new emperor, he effectually opposed their attempt, and prevented the effect. Several disturbances which were raised in Rome were pacified by his care. Nevertheless he by letters encouraged the pastors of the church to resist the heresy which the emperor endeavoured to establish by bloodshed and violence. The tyrant sent orders to several of his officers, six or seven times, to murder the pope: but he was so faithfully guarded by the Romans and Lombards, that he escaped all their snares. St. Gregory II. held the pontificate fifteen years, eight months, and twenty-three days, and died in 731, on the 10th of February; but the Roman Martyrology consecrates to his memory the 13th, which was probably the day on which his corpse was deposited in the Vatican church.

St. MARTINIANUS, HERMIT AT ATHENS.

Martinianus was born at Cæsarea in Palestine, during the reign of Constantius. At eighteen years of age he retired to a mountain near that city, called, The place of the Ark, where he lived for twenty-five years among many holy solitaries in the practice of all virtues, and was endowed with the gift of miracles. A wicked strumpet of Cæsarea, called Zoe, hearing his sanctity much extolled, at the instigation of the devil, undertook to pervert him. She feigned herself a poor woman wandering in the desert late at night, and ready to perish. By this pretext she prevailed on Martinianus to let her remain that night in his cell. Towards morning she threw aside her rags, put on her best attire, and going in to Martinianus, told him she was a lady of the city, possessed of a large estate and plentiful fortune, all which she came to offer

him with herself. She also instanced, in the examples of the saints of the Old Testament, who were rich and engaged in the conjugal state, to induce him to abandon his purpose. The hermit, who should have imitated the chaste Joseph in his flight, was permitted, in punishment perhaps of some secret presumption, to listen to her enchanting tongue, and to consent in his heart to her proposal. But as it was near the time that he expected certain persons to call on him to receive his blessing and instructions, he told her he would go and meet them on the road and dismiss them. He went out with this intent, but being touched with remorse, he returned speedily to his cell, where, making a great fire, he thrust his feet into it. The pain this occasioned was so great, that he could not forbear crying out aloud. The woman at the noise ran in, and found him lying on the ground, bathed in tears, and his feet half burned. On seeing her he said, "Ah! if I cannot bear this weak fire, how can I endure that of hell?" This example excited Zoe to sentiments of grief and repentance, and she conjured him to put her in a way of securing her salvation. He sent her to Bethlehem, to the monastery of St. Paula, in which she lived in continual penance, and lying on the bare floor, with no other sustenance than bread and water. Martinianus, as soon as his legs were healed, which was not till seven months after, not being able all that time to rise from the ground, retired to a rock surrounded with water on every side, to be secure from the approach of danger and all occasions of sin. He lived here exposed always to the open air, and without ever seeing any human creature, except a boatman, who brought him twice a year biscuit and fresh water, and twigs wherewith to make baskets. Six years after this, he saw a vessel split and wrecked at the bottom of his rock. All on board perished, ex-

cept one girl, who, floating on a plank, cried out for succour. Martinianus could not refuse to go down and save her life: but fearing the danger of living on the same mountain with her till the boatman should come, as was expected in two months, resolved to leave her there, to subsist on his provisions till that time, and she chose to end her days on this rock in imitation of his penitential life. He, trusting himself to the waves and Providence, to shun all danger of sin, swam to the main land, and travelled through many deserts to Athens where he made a happy end towards the year 400, being about fifty years old. His name, though not mentioned in the Roman Martyrology, occurs in the Greek Menæa, and was in great veneration in the East, particularly at Constantinople, in the famous church near Sancta Sophia. See his acts in the Bollandists, and in most compilers of the lives of saints. Also Jos. Assemani in Cal. Univ. ad 13 Feb. t. 6. p. 145.

ST. MODOMNOC, OR DOMINICK, OF OSSORY, C.

He is said to have been of the noble race of the O'Neils, and, passing into Wales, to have studied under St. David in the vale of Ross. After his return home he served God at Tiprat Fachna, in the western part of Ossory. He is said to have been honoured there with the episcopal dignity, about the middle of the sixth century. The see of Ossory was translated from Seirkeran, the capital of this small county, to Aghavoa, in the eleventh century and in the twelfth, in the reign of Henry II. to Kilkenny. See Sir James Ware, l. De Antiquitatibus, Hiberniæ, and l De Episcopat. Hibern.

ST. STEPHEN, ABBOT.

He was abbot of a monastery near the walls of Rieti, in Italy, and a man of admirable sanctity. He had despised all things for the love of heaven. He shunned all company to employ himself wholly in prayer. So wonderful was his patience, that he looked upon them as his greatest friends and benefactors, who did him the greatest injuries, and regarded insults as his greatest gain. He lived in extreme poverty, and a privation of all the conveniences of life. His barns, with all the corn in them, the whole subsistence of his family, were burned down by wicked men. He received the news with cheerfulness, grieving only for their sin by which God was offended. In his agony angels were seen surrounding him to conduct his happy soul to bliss. He lived in the sixth age. He is named in the Roman Martyrology. See St. Gregory, hom. 35. in Evang.

B. ROGER, ABBOT, C.

Having embraced the Cistercian order at Loroy, or Locus Regis, in Berry, he was chosen abbot of Elan near Retel in Champagne, and died about the year 1175. His remains are enshrined in a chapel which bears his name, in the church at Elan, where his festival is kept with a mass in his honour on the 13th of February. His life was wrote by a monk of Elan. See Chatelain, on the 4th of January, on which day his name occurs in a Cistercian calendar printed at Dijon.

FEBRUARY XIV.

ST. VALENTINE, PRIEST AND MARTYR.

Here is given only an abridgment of the principal circumstances of his acts, from Tillem. t. 4.

THIRD AGE.

VALENTINE was a holy priest in Rome, who, with St. Marius and his family, assisted the martyrs in the persecution under Claudius II. He was apprehended, and sent by the emperor to the prefect of Rome; who, on finding all his promises to make him renounce his faith ineffectual, commanded him to be beaten with clubs, and afterward to be beheaded, which was executed on the 14th of February, about the year 270. Pope Julius I. is said to have built a church near Ponte Mole to his memory, which for a long time gave name to the gate, now called Porta del Popolo, formerly Porta Valentini. The greatest part of his relics are now in the church of St. Praxedes. His name is celebrated as that of an illustrious martyr in the sacramentary of St. Gregory, the Roman Missal of Thomasius, in the calendar of F. Fronto, and that of Allatius, in Bede, Usuard, Ado, Notker, and all other martyrologies on this day. To abolish the heathen's lewd superstitious custom of boys drawing the names of girls, in honour of their goddess Februata Juno, on the 15th of this month, several zealous pastors substituted the names of saints in billets given on this day. See January 29, on St. Francis de Sales.

ST. MARO, ABBOT.

From Theodoret Philoth. Tillem. t. 12.

A. D. 433.

ST. MARO made choice of a solitary abode on

a mountain in the diocess of Syria and near that city, where, out of a spirit of mortification, he lived for the most part in the open air. He had indeed a little hut, covered with goat skins, to shelter him from the inclemencies of the weather; but he very seldom made use of it for that purpose, even on the most urgent occasions. Finding here a heathen temple, he dedicated it to the true God, and made it his house of prayer. Being renowned for sanctity, he was raised, in 405, to the dignity of priesthood. St. Chrysostom, who had a singular regard for him, wrote to him from Cucusus, the place of his banishment, and recommended himself to his prayers, and begged to hear from him by every opportunity.[1]

St. Zebinus, our saint's master, surpassed all the solitaries of his time, with regard to assiduity in prayer. He devoted to this exercise whole days and nights, without being sensible of any weariness or fatigue: nay, his ardour for it seemed rather to increase than slacken by its continuance. He generally prayed in an erect posture; but in his old age was forced to support his body by leaning on a staff. He gave advice in very few words to those that came to see him, to gain the more time for heavenly contemplation. St. Maro imitated his constancy in prayer: yet he not only received all visitants with great tenderness, but encouraged their stay with him; though few were willing to pass the whole night in prayer standing. God recompensed his labours with most abundant graces, and the gift of curing all distempers, both of body and mind. He prescribed admirable remedies against all vices. This drew great multitudes to him, and he erected many monasteries in Syria, and trained up holy solitaries. Theodoret, bishop of Cyr, says, that the great number of monks who peopled his diocess were the fruit of his instructions. The chief

1 S. Chrys. ep. 36.

among his disciples was St. James of Cyr, who gloried that he had received from the hands of St. Maro his first hair-cloth.

God called St. Maro to his glory after a short illness, which showed, says Theodoret, the great weakness to which his body was reduced. A pious contest ensued among the neighbouring provinces about his burial. The inhabitants of a large and populous place carried off the treasure, and built to his honour a spacious church over his tomb, to which a monastery was adjoined, which seems to have been the monastery of St. Mary in the diocess of Apamea.[1]

ST. ABRAAMES, BISHOP OF CARRES.

He was a holy solitary, who, going to preach to an idolatrous village on mount Libanus, overcame

1 It is not altogether certain whether this monastery near Apamea, or another on the Orontes, between Apamea and Emesa, or a third in Palmyrene, (for each of them bore his name,) possessed his body, or gave name to the people called Maronites. It seems most probable of the second, the abbot of which is styled primate of all the monasteries of the second Syria, in the acts of the second council of Constantinople, under the patriarch Mennas, in 536, and he subscribes first in a common letter to pope Hormisdas, in 517. The Maronites were called so from these religious, in the fifth century, and adhered to the council of Chalcedon against the Eutychians. They were joined in communion with the Melchites or Loyalists, who maintained the authority of the council of Chalcedon. The Maronites, with their patriarch, who live in Syria, towards the sea-coast, especially about mount Libanus, are steady in the communion of the catholic church, and profess a strict obedience to the pope, as its supreme pastor; and such has always been the conduct of that nation, except during a very short time, that they were inveigled into the Greek schism; and some fell into Eutychianism, and a greater number into Nestorianism; they returned to the communion of the catholic church under Gregory XIII. and Clement VIII. as Stephen Assemani proves (Assemani, Act. Mart. t. 2. p. 410.) against the slander of Eutychius in his Arabic Annals, which had imposed upon Renaudot. The Maronites keep the feast of St. Maro on the 9th, the Greeks on the 14th of February. The seminary of the Maronites at Rome, founded by Gregory XIII. under the direction of the Jesuits, had produced several great men, who have exceedingly promoted true literature, especially the Oriential; such as Abraham Eckellensis, the three Assemani, Joseph, Stephen Evodius, and Lewis, known by his judicious writings on the ceremonies of the church. The patriarch of the Maronites, styled of Antioch, resides in the monastery of Canabine, at the foot of Mount Libanus; he is confirmed by the pope, and has under him five metropolitans, namely, of Tyre, Damascus, Tripolis, Aleppo, and Nicosia, in Cyprus. See Le Quien, Oriens Christianus, t. 3. p. 46.

the persecutions of the heathens by meekness and patience. When he had narrowly escaped death from their hands, he borrowed money, wherewith to satisfy the demands of the collectors of the public taxes, for their failure in which respect they were to be cast into prison; and by this charity he gained them all to Christ. After instructing them for three years, he left them in the care of a holy priest, and returned to his desert. He was some time after ordained bishop of Carres, in Mesopotamia, which country he cleared of idolatry, dissentions, and other vices. He joined the recollection and penance of a monk with the labours of his functions, and died at Constantinople, in 422, having been sent for to court by Theodosius the Younger, and there treated with the greatest honour on account of his sanctity. That emperor kept one of his mean garments, and wore it himself on certain days, out of respect. See Theodoret Philoth. c. 17. t. 3. p. 847.

ST. AUXENTIUS, H.

He was a holy hermit in Bithynia, in the fifth age. In his youth he was one of the equestrian guards of Theodosius the Younger, but this state of life, which he discharged with the utmost fidelity to his prince, did not hinder him from making the service of God his main concern. All his spare time was spent in solitude and prayer; and he often visited holy hermits, to spend the nights with them in tears and singing the divine praises, prostrate on the ground. The fear of vain glory moved him to retire to the desert mountain of Oxea, in Bithynia, eight miles from Constantinople. After the council of Chalcedon, where he appeared upon summons by order of the emperor Marcian, against Eutyches, he chose a cell on the mountain of Siope, near Chalcedon, in which he contributed to the sanctification of many who

resorted to him for advice; he finished his martyrdom of penance, together with his life, about 470. Sozomen commended exceedingly his sanctity whilst he was yet living.[1] St. Stephen the Younger caused the church of his monastery to be dedicated to God, under the invocation of our saint; and mount Siope is called to this day Mount St. Auxentius. See his life, wrote from the relation of his disciple Vendimian, with the remarks of Henschenius.

ST. CONRAN, BISHOP OF ORKNEY, CONFESSOR.

THE isles of Orkney are twenty-six in number, besides the lesser, called Holmes, which are uninhabited, and serve only for pasture. The faith was planted here by St. Palladius, and St. Sylvester, one of his fellow-labourers, who was appointed by him the first pastor of this church, and was honoured in it on the 5th of February. In these islands formerly stood a great number of holy monasteries, the chief of which was Kirkwall. This place was the bishop's residence, and is at this day the only remarkable town in these islands. It is situated in the largest of them, which is thirty miles long, called anciently Pomonia, now Mainland. This church is much indebted to St. Conran, who was bishop here in the seventh century, and whose name, for the austerity of his life, zeal, and eminent sanctity, was no less famous in those parts, so long as the catholic religion flourished there, than those of St. Palladius and of St. Kentigern. The cathedral of Orkney was dedicated under the invocation of St. Magnus, king of Norway. On St. Conran, see bishop Lesley, Hist. Scot. l. 4.

1 Sozom. l. 7. c. 21.

FEBRUARY XV.

SS. FAUSTINUS AND JOVITA, MM.
A. D. 121.

Faustinus and Jovita were brothers, nobly born, and zealous professors of the Christian religion, which they preached without fear in their city of Brescia, whilst the bishop of that place lay concealed during the persecution. The acts of their martyrdom seeming of doubtful authority, all that we can affirm with certainty of them is, that their remarkable zeal excited the fury of the heathens against them, and procured them a glorious death for their faith at Brescia in Lombardy, under the emperor Adrian. Julian, a heathen lord, apprehended them; and the emperor himself passing through Brescia, when neither threats nor torments could shake their constancy, commanded them to be beheaded. They seem to have suffered about the year 121.[1] The city of Brescia honours them as its chief patrons, and possesses their relics. A very ancient church in that city bears their name, and all martyrologies mention them.

The spirit of Christ is a spirit of martyrdom, at least of mortification and penance. It is always the spirit of the cross. The remains of the old man, of sin and of death, must be extinguished, before one can be made heavenly by putting on affections which are divine. What mortifies the senses and the flesh gives life to the spirit, and what weakens and subdues the body strengthens the soul. Hence the divine love infuses a spirit of mortification, patience, obedience, humility, and meekness, with a love of sufferings and contempt, in which consists the sweetness of the cross. The more we share in the suffering life of

1 See Tillemont, t. 2. p. 249. Pagi, &c.

Christ, the greater share we inherit in his spirit, and in the fruit of his death. To souls mortified to their senses and disengaged from earthly things, God gives frequent foretastes of the sweetness of eternal life, and the most ardent desires of possessing him in his glory. This is the spirit of martyrdom, which entitles a Christian to a happy resurrection and to the bliss of the life to come.

ST. SIGEFRIDE, OR SIGFRID,[1]

BISHOP, APOSTLE OF SWEDEN.

Our zealous ancestors having received the light of faith, propagated the same throughout all the northern provinces of Europe. St. Anscarius had planted the faith in Sweden, in 830; but it relapsed soon after into idolatry. King Olas Scobcong entreated king Edred, who died in 951, to send him missionaries to preach the gospel in his country. Sigefride, an eminent priest of York, undertook that mission, and on the 21st of June, in 950, arrived at Wexiow, in Gothland, in the territory of Smaland. He first erected a cross, then built a church of wood, celebrated the divine mysteries, and preached to the people. Twelve principal men of the province were converted by him, and one who died, was buried after the Christian manner, and a cross placed upon his grave. So great numbers were in a short time brought to the faith, that the cross of Christ was triumphantly planted in all the twelve tribes into which the inhabitants of South-Gothland were

1 From Joan. Magnus, Hist. Goth. l. 17. c. 20. quoted by Bollandus, and chiefly from a life of this saint, compiled at Wexiow about the year 1205, published from an ancient MS. by the care of Ericus, Benzelius, junior, in his Monumenta Historica vetera Ecclesiæ Suevogothicæ, printed at Upsal in 1709, p. 1. ad p. 14. and in Prolegom. Sect. 1. The editor was not able to discover the author's name: upon which he repeats the remark of the learned Maussac (in Diss. Critica ad Harpocrat.) that "many monkish writers endeavoured to conceal their names out of humility." On which see Mabillon, Diar. Ital. p. 36.

divided. The fountain near the mountain of Ostrabo, since called Wexiow, in which St. Sigefride baptized the catechumens, long retained the names of the twelve first converts, engraved on a monument. King Olas was much pleased with the accounts he heard of the man of God, and many flocked from remote parts, out of mere curiosity to hear his doctrine, and to see him minister at the altar, admiring the rich ornaments of linen, and over them of silk, which he wore in celebrating the divine mysteries, with a mitre on his head, and a crosier, or pastoral staff in his hands. Also the gold and silver vessels which he had brought with him for the use of the altar, and the dignity and majesty of the ceremonies of the Christian worship, attracted their attention. But the sublime truths of our religion, and the mortification, disinterestedness, zeal, and sanctity of the apostolic missionaries, engaged them to give them a favourable reception, and to open their eyes to the evidence of the divine revelation. St. Sigefride ordained two bishops, the one of East, the other of West Gothland, or Lingkoping, and Scara. The see of Wexiow he continued himself to govern so long as he lived. His three nephews, Unaman a priest, and Sunaman and Wiaman, the one a deacon, and the other a subdeacon, were his chief assistants in his apostolic labours. Having intrusted the administration of his see of Wexiow to Unaman, and left his two brothers to assist and comfort him, the saint himself set out to carry the light of the gospel into the midland and northern provinces. King Olas received him with great respect, and was baptized by him, with his whole court and his army. St. Sigefride founded many churches and consecrated a bishop of Upsal, and another of Strengues. The former of these sees had been founded by St. Anscharius, in 830, and the bishop was declared by pope Alexander III. in 1160, metropo-

litan and primate of the whole kingdom. During the absence of our saint, a troop of idolatrous rebels, partly out of hatred of the Christian religion and partly for booty, plundered the church of Wexiow, and barbarously murdered the holy pastor Unaman and his two brothers. Their bodies they buried in the midst of a forest, where they have always remained hid. But the murderers put the heads of the martyrs into a box, which, with a great stone they had fastened to it, they threw into a great pond. But they were afterward taken out, and kept richly enshrined in the church of Wexiow till their relics were removed by the Lutherans. These three holy martyrs were honoured in Sweden. Upon the news of this massacre St. Sigefride hastened to Wexiow to repair the ruins of his church. The king resolved to put the murderers to death; but Sigefride, by his earnest entreaties, prevailed on him to spare their lives. However, he condemned them to pay a heavy fine, which he would have bestowed on the saint, but he refused accepting a single farthing of it, notwithstanding his extreme poverty, and the difficulties which he had to struggle with, in laying the foundation of that new church. He had inherited the spirit of the apostles in an heroic degree. Our saint died about the year 1002, and was buried in his cathedral at Wexiow, where his tomb became famous for miracles. He was canonized about the year 1158, by pope Adrian IV.,[1] an Englishman, who had himself laboured zealously, and with great success, in the conversion of Norway, and other northern countries, about a hundred and forty years after St. Sigefride, who was honoured by the Swedes as their apostle, till the change of religion among them.[2]

1 Vastove, Vinea Aquilonis.

2 In the life of St. Sigefride, published by Benzelius, it is mentioned, that St. Sigefride, upon his first arrival in Sweden, preached chiefly by interpreters.

FEBRUARY XVI.

ST. ONESIMUS, DISCIPLE OF ST. PAUL.

He was a Phrygian by birth, slave to Philemon, a person of note of the city of Colossæ, converted to the faith by St. Paul. Having robbed his master, and being obliged to fly, he providentially met with St. Paul, then a prisoner for the faith at Rome, who there converted and baptized him, and sent him with his canonical letter of recommendation to Philemon, by whom he was pardoned, set at liberty, and sent back to his spiritual father, whom he afterward faithfully served. That apostle made him, with Tychius, the bearer of his epistle to the Colossians,[1] and afterward, as St. Jerom[2] and other fathers witness, a preacher of the gospel, and a bishop. The Greeks say, he was crowned with martyrdom under Domitian, in the year 95, and keep his festival on the 15th. Bede, Ado, Usuard, the Roman and other Latin martyrologists, mention him on the 16th of February.[3]

Baronius and some others confound him with St. Onesimus, the third bishop of Ephesus, after St. Timothy, who was succeeded first by John, then by Caius. This Onesimus showed great respect and charity to St. Ignatius, when on his journey to Rome, in 107, and is highly commended by him.[4]

When a sinner, by the light and power of an extraordinary grace, is snatched like a firebrand out of the fire, and rescued from the gates of hell, we cannot wonder if he is swallowed up by the deepest and most lively sense of his own guilt, and of the divine mercy; if such a one loves

1 Colos. iv. 2 Ep. 62. c. 2.
3 Tillem. t. 1. p. 294. and note 10. on St. Paul.
4 Ep. ad Ephes.

much, because much has been forgiven him; if he endeavours to repair his past crimes by heroic acts of penance and all virtues, and if he makes haste to redeem his lost time by a zeal and vigilance hard to be imitated by others. Hence we read of the *first love of the church of Ephesus*[1] as more perfect. The ardour of the compunction and love of a true penitent, is compared to the unparalleled *love of Judah in the day of her espousal.*[2] This ardour is not to be understood as a passing sally of the purest passions, as a short-lived fit of fervour, or desire of perfection, as a transient taste or sudden transport of the soul: it must be sincere and constant. With what excess of goodness does God communicate himself to souls which thus open themselves to him! With what caresses does he often visit them! With what a profusion of graces does he enrich and strengthen them! It often happens that, in the beginning, God, either to allure the frailty of a new convert, or to fortify his resolution against hazardous trials, favours him with more than usual communications of the sweetness of his love, and ravishes him by some glances, as it were, of the beatific vision. His tenderness was not less, when, for their spiritual advancement, their exercise in heroic virtues, and the increase of their victories and glory, he conducted them through severe trials. On the other side, with what fidelity and ardour did these holy penitents improve themselves daily in divine love and all virtues! Alas! our coldness and insensibility, since our pretended conversion from the world and sin, is a far greater subject of amazement than the extraordinary fervour of the saints in the divine service.

1 Apoc. 11. 4. 2 Jerem 1. 2.

SS. ELIAS, JEREMY, ISAIAS, SAMUEL, AND DANIEL,

WITH OTHER HOLY MARTYRS, AT CÆSAREA, IN PALESTINE.

From Eusebius's relation of the martyrs of Palestine.

A. D. 309.

In the year 309, the emperors Galerius Maximianus and Maximinus continuing the persecution begun by Dioclesian, these five pious Egyptians went to visit the confessors condemned to the mines in Cilicia, and on their return were stopped by the guards of the gates of Cæsarea, in Palestine, as they were entering the town. They readily declared themselves Christians, together with the motive of their journey; upon which they were apprehended. The day following they were brought before Firmilian, the governor of Palestine, together with St. Pamphilus and others. The judge, before he began his interrogatory, ordered the five Egyptians to be laid on the rack, as was his custom. After they had long suffered all manner of tortures, he addressed himself to him who seemed to be their chief, and asked him his name and his country. They had changed their names, which, perhaps, before their conversion, were those of some heathen gods, as was customary in Egypt. The martyr answered according to the names they had given themselves, that he was called Elias, and his companions, Jeremy, Isaias, Samuel, and Daniel. Firmilian then asked their country; he answered Jerusalem, meaning the heavenly Jerusalem, the true country of all Christians. The judge inquired in what part of the world that was, and ordered him to be tormented with fresh cruelty. All this while the executioners continued to tear his body with stripes, whilst his hands were bound behind him, and his feet squeezed in the woodstocks, called the Nervus.

The judge, at last, tired with tormenting them, condemned all five to be beheaded, which was immediately executed.

Porphyrius, a youth who was a servant of St. Pamphilus, hearing the sentence pronounced, cried out, that at least the honour of burial ought not to be refused them. Firmilian, provoked at this boldness, ordered him to be apprehended; and finding that he confessed himself a Christian, and refused to sacrifice, ordered his sides to be torn so cruelly, that his very bones and bowels were exposed to view. He underwent all this without a sigh or tear, or so much as making the least complaint. The tyrant, not to be overcome by so heroic a constancy, gave orders for a great fire to be kindled, with a vacant space to be left in the midst of it, for the martyr to be laid in, when taken off the rack. This was accordingly done, and he lay there a considerable time, surrounded by the flames, singing the praises of God, and invoking the name of Jesus: till at length, quite broiled by the fire, he consummated a slow, but glorious martyrdom.

Seleucus, an eye-witness of this victory, was heard by the soldiers applauding the martyr's resolution; and being brought before the governor, he, without more ado, ordered his head to be struck off.

ST. JULIANA, VIRGIN AND MARTYR.

After many torments, she was beheaded at Nicomedia, under Galerius Maximianus. St. Gregory the Great mentions that her bones were translated to Rome. Part of them are now at Brussels, in the church of our Lady of Sablon. This saint is much honoured in the Low Countries.

ST. GREGORY X. POPE, C.

He was of an illustrious family, born at Pla-

centia, and at his baptism was called Theobald. In his youth he was distinguished for his extraordinary virtue, and his progress in his studies, especially of the canon law, which he began in Italy, and pursued at Paris, and lastly at Liege. He was archdeacon of this last church, when he received an order from the pope to preach the crusade for the recovery of the Holy Land. Incredible were the pains which he took in executing this commission, and in reconciling the Christian princes, who were at variance. The death of St. Lewis, in 1270, struck a damp upon the spirits of the Christians in the East, though the prince of Wales, soon after Edward I., king of England, sailed from Sicily, in March, 1271, to their assistance, took Jaffa and Nazareth, and plundered Antioch. A tender compassion for the distressed situation of the servants of Christ in those parts, moved the holy archdeacon of Liege to undertake a dangerous pilgrimage to Palestine, in order to comfort them, and at the same time to satisfy his devotion by visiting the holy places. The see of Rome had been vacant almost three years, from the death of Clement IV., in November, 1268, the cardinals who were assembled at Viterbo not coming to an agreement in the choice of a pope, till, by common consent, they referred his election to six amongst them, who, on the 1st of September, in 1271, nominated Theobald, the archdeacon of Liege. Upon the news of his election, he prepared himself to return to Italy. Nothing could be more tender and moving than his last farewell to the disconsolate Christians of Palestine, whom he promised, in a most solemn manner, never to forget. He arrived at Rome in March, and was first ordained priest, then consecrated bishop, and crowned on the 27th of the same month, in 1272. He took the name of Gregory X., and, to procure the most effectual succour to the Holy Land, called a

general council to meet at Lyons, where pope Innocent IV., had held the last in 1245, partly for the same purpose of the holy war, and partly to endeavour to reclaim the emperor Frederick II. The city of Lyons was most convenient for the meeting of those princes whose succours were principally expected for the holy war, and was most unexceptionable, because at that time it acknowledged no other sovereign than its archbishop. Henry III., king of England, died on the 16th of November, 1272, and Edward I., who had concluded a peace of ten years with the Saracens, in the name of the Christians in Syria and Palestine, returned for England, and on the road at Trapani, in Sicily, met the news of his father's death. In the same place he received most obliging letters from pope Gregory X. The fourteenth general council, the second of Lyons, was opened in that city in May, 1274, in which were assembled five hundred bishops and seventy abbots. In the fourth session, the Greek ambassadors (who were, Germanus, formerly patriarch of Constantinople, Theophanes, archbishop of Nice, and the senator, George Acropolita, great logothete, or chancellor) were admitted. The logothete abjured the schism in the name of the emperor Michael Palæologus; and the pope, whilst Te Deum was sung, stood with his cheeks all the time bathed in tears. St. Thomas Aquinas died on the 7th of March, before the opening of the council, and St. Bonadventure at Lyons, on the 15th of July. The council was closed by the fifth and last session, on the 17th of July. The more our holy pope was overwhelmed with public affairs, the more watchful he was over his own soul, and the more earnest in the interior duties of self-examination, contemplation, and prayer. He spoke little, conversing assiduously in his heart with God; he was very abstemious in his diet, and most rigorous to him-

self in all things. By this crucified life, his soul was prepared to taste the hidden manna which is concealed in the divine word, with which he continually nourished it in holy meditation. After the council, he was taken up in concerting measures for carrying its decrees into execution, particularly those relating to the crusade in the East. By his unwearied application to business, and the fatigues of his journey, in passing the Alps in his return to Rome, he contracted a distemper, of which he died at Arezzo, on the 10th of January, in 1276, three years and nine months after his consecration, and four years, four months, and ten days after his election.

His name is inserted in the Roman Martyrology, published by Benedict XIV., on the 16th of February. See Platina, Ciacconius, Saint Antoninus, Hist. part. 3. tit. 20. c. 2. The account of his life and miracles in the archives of the tribunal of the Rota, and in Benedict XIV. de Canoniz. l. 2. t. 2. Append. 8. p. 673; the proofs of his miracles, ib. p. 709; also, ib. l. 2. c. 24. sec. 37. and 42. and l. 1. c. 20. n. 17. See likewise his life, copied from a MS. history of several popes, by Bernard Guidonis, published by Muratori, Scriptor. Ital. t. 3. p. 597, and another life of this pope, wrote before the canonization of St. Lewis, in which mention is made of miraculous cures performed by him, ibid. p. 599. 604.

ST. TANCO, OR TATTA, B. M.

PATTON, abbot of Amabaric, in Scotland, passing into Germany to preach the gospel, and being chosen bishop of Verdun, Tanco, who had served God many years in that abbey in great reputation for his singular learning and piety, was raised to the dignity of abbot. Out of an ardent thirst after martyrdom, he resigned his charge, and followed his countryman and predecessor into Germany, where, after some time, he succeeded him in the see of Verdun, of which he was the third bishop. His success in propagating the faith was exceeding great, but it was to him a subject of inexpressible grief to see many who professed themselves Christians, live enslaved to shameful passions. In order to convert, or at least to confound them, he preached a most zeal-

ous sermon against the vices which reigned amongst them; at which a barbarous mob was so enraged as fiercely to assault him; and one of them, stabbing him with a lance, procured him the glorious crown of martyrdom, about the year 815. This account of him is given us by Krantzius, Lesley, &c.

FEBRUARY XVII.

ST. FLAVIAN, M.

ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

From the councils, and historians Cedrenus, Evagrius, Theophanes, &c.

A. D. 449.

St. Flavian was a priest of distinguished merit, and treasurer of the church of Constantinople, when he succeeded St. Proclus in the archiepiscopal dignity in 447. The eunuch Chrysaphius, chamberlain to the emperor Theodosius the Younger, and a particular favourite, suggested to his master, a weak prince, to require of him a present, out of gratitude to the emperor for his promotion. The holy bishop sent him some blessed bread, according to the custom of the church at that time, as a benediction and symbol of communion. Chrysaphius let him know that it was a present of a very different kind that was expected from him. St. Flavian, an enemy to simony, answered resolutely, that the revenues and treasure of the church were designed for other uses, namely, the honour of God and the relief of his poor. The eunuch, highly provoked at the bishop's refusal, from that moment resolved to contrive his ruin. Wherefore, with a view to his expulsion, he persuaded the emperor, by the means of his wife Eudoxia, to order the bishop to make Pulcheria, sister to Theodosius, a deaconess of his church. The saint's refusal was a second

offence in the eyes of the sycophants of the court. The next year Chrysaphius was still more grievously offended with our saint for his condemning the errors of his kinsman Eutyches, abbot of a monastery of three hundred monks, near the city, who had acquired a reputation for virtue, but in effect was no better than an ignorant, proud, and obstinate man. His intemperate zeal against Nestorius, for asserting two distinct persons in Christ, threw him into the opposite error, that of denying two distinct natures after the incarnation.

In a council, held by St. Flavian in 448, Eutyches was accused of this error by Eusebius of Dorylæum, his former friend, and it was there condemned as heretical, and the author was cited to appear to give an account of his faith. On the day appointed in the last summons he appeared before the council, but attended by two of the principal officers of the court, and a troop of the imperial guards. Being admitted and interrogated on the point in question, that is, his faith concerning the incarnation; he declared that he acknowledged indeed two natures before the union, but after it only one. To all reasonings and authority produced against his tenet, his reply was, that he did not come thither to dispute, but to satisfy the assembly what his faith was. The council, upon this, anathematized and deposed him, and St. Flavian pronounced the sentence, which was subscribed by thirty-two bishops and twenty-three abbots, of which last eighteen were priests. Eutyches said privately to his guards, that he appealed to the bishops of Rome, Egypt, and Jerusalem; and in a letter he wrote to St. Leo to complain of his usage in the council, he endeavoured to impose on the pope. But his Holiness being informed of the state of the affair by St. Flavian, wrote to him an ample declaration of the orthodox faith upon the point, which was afterwards read, and inserted in the

acts of the council of Chalcedon, in which the errors of Eutyches were solemnly condemned. Chrysaphius, however, had interest enough with the weak emperor to obtain an order for a re-examination of the cause between St. Flavian and Eutyches in another council. This met in April, 449, consisting of about thirty bishops, one third whereof had assisted at the late council. St. Flavian being looked on as a party, Thalassius, bishop of Cæsarea, presided in his room. After the strictest scrutiny into every particular, the impiety of Eutyches, and the justice of our saint's proceedings, clearly appeared. St. Flavian presented to the emperor a profession of his faith, wherein he condemned the errors of both Eutyches and Nestorius, his adversaries pretending that he favoured the latter.

Chrysaphius, though baffled in his attempts, was still bent on the ruin of the holy bishop, and employed all his craft and power to save Eutyches and destroy Flavian. With this view he wrote to Dioscorus, a man of a violent temper, who had succeeded St. Cyril in the patriarchal see of Alexandria, promising him his friendship and favour in all his designs, if he would undertake the defence of the deposed abbot against Flavian and Eusebius. Dioscorus came into his measures; and by their joint interest with the empress Eudoxia, glad of an opportunity to mortify Pulcheria, who had a high esteem for our saint, they prevailed with the emperor to order a council to be called at Ephesus, to determine the dispute. Dioscorus was invited by the emperor to come and preside in it, accompanied with ten metropolitans, and other bishops, together with the archimandrite, or abbot Barsumas, a man strongly attached to Eutyches and Dioscorus. The like directions were sent to the other patriarchs. St. Leo, who was invited, though late, sent legates to act in his name, Julius, bishop of Puteoli, Re-

natus, a priest, who died on the road, Hilarius, a deacon, and Dulcitius, a notary. He sent by them a learned letter to St. Flavian, in which he taxes the ignorance of Eutyches in the holy scriptures, and explains the Catholic doctrine against that heresiarch, which he also did by other letters.

The false council of Ephesus, for the violences therein used commonly called the Latrocinale, was opened on the 8th of August, in 449, and consisted of one hundred and thirty bishops, or their deputies, from Egypt and the East. Eutyches was there, and two officers from the emperor with a great number of soldiers. Every thing was carried on by violence and open faction, in favour of Eutyches by those officers and bishops who had espoused his party and formed a cabal. The pope's legates were never suffered to read his letters to the council. The final result of the proceedings was, to pronounce sentence of deposition against St. Flavian and Eusebius. The pope's legates protested against the sentence. Hilarius, the deacon, cried out aloud, "contradicitur," opposition is made; which Latin word was inserted in the Greek acts of the synod. And Dioscorus no sooner began to read the sentence, but he was interrupted by several of the bishops, who, prostrating themselves before him, besought him, in the most submissive terms, to proceed no further in so unwarrantable an affair. Upon this he starts up, and calls aloud for the imperial commissioners, Elpidius and Eulogius, who, without more ado, ordered the church doors to be set open; upon which Proclus, the proconsul of Asia, entered, surrounded with a band of soldiers, and followed by a confused multitude with chains, clubs, and swords. This struck such a terror into the whole assembly, that, when the bishops were required by Dioscorus and his creatures to subscribe, few or none had the courage to withstand his threats, the pope's legates ex-

cepted, who protested aloud against these violent proceedings; one of whom was imprisoned; the other, Hilarius, got off with much difficulty, and came safe to Rome. St. Flavian, on hearing the sentence read by Dioscorus, appealed from him to the holy see, and delivered his acts of appeal in writing to the pope's legates, then present. This so provoked Dioscorus,[1] that, together with Barsumas and others of their party,[2] after throwing the holy bishop on the ground, they so kicked and bruised him, that he died within a few days, in 449, not at Ephesus, as some have said by mistake, but in his exile at Epipus, two days' journey from that city, situated near Sardes in Lydia, as Marcellinus testifies in his chronicle.

The council being over, Dioscorus, with two of his Egyptian bishops, had the insolence to excommunicate St. Leo. But violence and injustice did not triumph long. For the emperor's eyes being opened on his sister Pulcheria's return to court, whom the ambition of Chrysaphius had found means to remove in the beginning of these disturbances, the eunuch was disgraced, and soon after put to death; and the empress Eudoxia obliged to retire to Jerusalem. The next year the emperor died, as Cedrenus says, penitent; and Pulcheria, ascending the throne in 450, ordered St. Flavian's body to be brought with great honour to Constantinople, and there magnificently interred, among his predecessors, in that see. St. Leo had, upon the first news of these proceedings, wrote to him to comfort him, as also to Theodosius, Pulcheria, and the clergy of Constantinople in his defence. The general council of Chalcedon declared him a saint and martyr, and paid great honours to his memory, in 451. The same council honourably restored Eusebius of Dorylæum to his see. Pope Hilarius, who had been St. Leo's legate at Ephesus, had so

1 Evag. l. xi. c. 11. 2 Conc. Calced. act. 4.

great a veneration for the saint, that he caused his martyrdom to be represented in Mosaic work, in the church which he built in honour of the holy Cross. The wicked Dioscorus was condemned by the council of Chalcedon, in 451, and died obstinate and impenitent, in the Eutychian heresy, and his other crimes, in his banishment at Gangres, in 454.

It was the glory of St. Flavian to die a martyr of the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God. This is the fundamental article of the Christian religion, and above all other mysteries, challenges our most profound homages and constant devotion. In it hath God displayed, in the most incomprehensible manner, the astonishing immensity of his power, mercy, wisdom, and love, the contemplation of which will be the sweet occupation of angels and saints to all eternity. The servants of God on earth find their greatest delight in meditating on this great mystery, and in profound adoration and transports of love, honouring, praising, and glorifying their divine Saviour, and studying to put on his spirit by the constant union in mind and heart, or of their thoughts and affections with him. Is it possible that we who believe in this God, who annihilated himself, and died for us most miserable and ungrateful sinners, should not die of love for him? At least, how is it possible we should not always have him present to our minds, and prostrate ourselves at his feet a thousand times a day to return him our most humble thanks, and to pay him the homages of our adoration, love, and praise? The more he is insulted in this mystery of goodness itself, by the blasphemies of unbelievers and heretics, the greater ought to be our zeal and fervour in honouring it. But as the incarnation is the mystery of the unfathomed humility of a God to heal the wound of our pride, it is only by humility, and the annihilation of crea-

tures in our hearts, that we can be disposed to contemplate or honour it with fruit. The dreadful fall and impenitence of Eutyches, after he had renounced the world with a view to give himself to God, were owing to the fatal sin of a secret pride.

SS. THEODULUS AND JULIAN, MM.

They suffered at Cæsarea in Palestine, at the same time with those mentioned yesterday, but are named on this day in the Roman Martyrology. Theodulus was an old man of eminent virtue and wisdom, who enjoyed one of the most honourable posts in the household of Firmilian, the governor of Palestine, and had several sons. His personal merit gained him the love of all that knew him, and the governor had a particular esteem for him. This holy man had seen the invincible courage and patience of the five Egyptian martyrs at Cæsarea, and, going to the prisons, made use of their example to encourage the other confessors, and prepare them for the like battles. Firmilian vexed at this conduct of an old favourite servant, sent for him, reproached him strongly with ingratitude, and, without hearing his defence, condemned him to be crucified. Theodulus received the sentence with joy, and went with transports to a death which was speedily to unite him to his Saviour, and in which he was thought worthy to bear a near resemblance to him. Julian, who shared the glory of that day with the other martyrs, was a Cappadocian, as was also St. Seleucus; he was only a catechumen, though highly esteemed by the faithful for his many great virtues, and he was just then come to Cæsarea. At his arrival, hearing of the conflicts of the martyrs, he ran to the place, and finding the execution over, expressed his veneration for them, by kissing and embracing the bodies

which had been animated by those heroic and happy souls. The guards apprehended him, and carried him to the governor, who, finding him as inflexible as the rest, would not lose his time in useless interrogatories, but immediately ordered him to be burnt. Julian, now master of all he wished for, gave God thanks for the honour done him by this sentence, and begged he would be pleased to accept of his life as a voluntary sacrifice. The courage and cheerfulness which he maintained to his last moment, filled his excutioners with surprise and confusion. See Eusebius, an eye-witness, l. de Mart. Palæst. c. 12. p. 337.

ST. SILVIN OF AUCHY, B. C.

He was born of a considerable family in the territory of Thoulouse, and passed his first years at the court of two successive kings, Childeric II. and Theodoric III. Every thing was ready for his marriage, when, powerfully touched by divine grace, he renounced all worldly prospects, and retired from court. His thoughts were now bent upon Jesus Christ alone, and he longed for nothing so much as to enjoy silence and solitude. After several devout penitential pilgrimages to Jerusalem and other places, he took orders at Rome, and was consecrated bishop, some say of Thoulouse, others of Terouenne. But his name is not found in any ancient register of either of those churches, and it is now agreed, among the most judicious critics, that he was ordained a regionary bishop to preach the gospel to infidels. His zeal carried him into the north of France, and he spent most of his time in the diocess of Terouenne, which was then full of Pagans, and Christians but one remove from them. He was indefatigable in preaching to them the great truths and essential obligations of our holy faith, and taught them to despise and renounce the

pleasures of this life, by appearing on all occasions a strong lesson of self-denial. Instructing them thus, both by words and actions, he gathered a large harvest in a wild and uncultivated field. After many years thus spent, he died at Auchy, in the county of Artois, on the 15th of February, in 718.

He is commemorated in Usuard, the Belgic and Roman Martyrologies, on the 17th, which was the day of his burial; but at Auchy on the 15th. The greatest part of his relics is now at St. Bertin's, at St. Omers, whither they were carried in 951, for fear of the Normans. Usuard is the first who styles St. Silvin bishop of Terouenne. Some think he was born not at Thoulouse, but at Thosa, or Doest, near Bruges, or rather at another Thosa, now Doesbury, in Brabant; for in his life it is said that he travelled westward to preach the gospel. His original life, which was ascribed to Antenor, a disciple of the saint, is lost: that which we have was compiled in the ninth century. See Bolland. t. 3, Feb. p. 29.

ST. LOMAN, OR LUMAN, B. C.

JOCELIN calls him a nephew of St. Patrick, by a sister. He was at least a disciple of that saint, and first bishop of Trim, in Meath. Port-Loman, a town belonging to the Nugents in West-meath, takes its name from him, and honours his memory with singular veneration. St. Forchern, son of the lord of that territory, was baptized by St. Loman, succeeded him in the bishopric of Trim, and is honoured among the saints in Ireland, both on this same day and on the 11th of October.

See Colgan on the 17th Febr. Usher's Antiqu. ad ann. 433.

ST. FINTAN, ABBOT OF CLUAINEDNECH,

WHICH Usher interprets the Ivy-Cave, in the diocess of Lethglean, in Leinster, in the sixth century. He had for disciple St. Comgal, the founder of the abbey of Benchor, and master of St. Columban. Colgan reckons twenty-four Irish saints of the name of Fintan; but probably several of these were the same person honoured in several places. Another St. Fintan, surnamed Munnu, who is honoured on the 21st of October, was very famous.

See Colgan, Usher, and Henschenius.

FEBRUARY XVIII.

ST. SIMEON, BISHOP OF JERUSALEM, M.

From Euseb. l. 3. c. 32. Tillem. t. 1. p. 186. and t. 2.

A. D. 116.

St. Simeon was the son of Cleophas, otherwise called Alpheus, brother to St. Joseph, and of Mary, sister of the Blessed Virgin. He was therefore nephew both to St. Joseph and to the Blessed Virgin, and cousin-german to Christ. Simeon and Simon are the same name, and this saint is, according to the best interpreters of the holy scriptures, the Simon mentioned,[1] who was brother to St. James the Lesser, and St. Jude, apostles, and to Joseph or José. He was eight or nine years older than our Saviour. We cannot doubt but he was an early follower of Christ, as his father and mother and three brothers were, and an exception to that of St. John,[2] that our Lord's relations did not believe in him. Nor does St. Luke[3] leave us any room to doubt but that he received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost with the Blessed Virgin and the apostles; for he mentions present St. James and St. Jude, and the brothers of our Lord. St. Epiphanius relates[4] that when the Jews massacred St. James the Lesser, his brother Simeon reproached them for their atrocious cruelty. St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, being put to death in the year 62, twenty-nine years after our Saviour's resurrection, the apostles and disciples met at Jerusalem to appoint him a successor. They unanimously chose St. Simeon, who had probably before assisted his brother in the government of that church.

In the year 66, in which SS. Peter and Paul

1 Matt. xiii. 55. 2 John vii. 5.
3 Acts i. 14. 4 Hær. 78. c. 14.

suffered martyrdom at Rome, the civil war began in Judea, by the seditions of the Jews against the Romans. The Christians in Jerusalem were warned by God of the impending destruction of that city, and by a divine revelation[1] commanded to leave it, as Lot was rescued out of Sodom. They therefore departed out of it the same year, before Vespasian, Nero's general, and afterward emperor, entered Judæa, and retired beyond Jordan to a small city called Pella; having St. Simeon at their head. After the taking and burning of Jerusalem, they returned thither again, and settled themselves amidst its ruins, till Adrian afterward entirely razed it. St. Epiphanius[2] and Eusebius[3] assure us, that the church here flourished extremely, and that multitudes of Jews were converted by the great number of prodigies and miracles wrought in it.

St. Simeon, amidst the consolations of the Holy Ghost and the great progress of the church, had the affliction to see two heresies arise within its bosom, namely, those of the Nazareans and the Ebionites; the first seeds of which, according to St. Epiphanius, appeared at Pella. The Nazareans were a sect of men between Jews and Christians, but abhorred by both. They allowed Christ to be the greatest of the prophets, but said he was a mere man, whose natural parents were Joseph and Mary: they joined all the ceremonies of the old law with the new, and observed both the Jewish Sabbath and the Sunday. Ebion added other errors to these, which Cerenthus had also espoused, and taught many superstitions, permitted divorces, and allowed of the most infamous abominations. He began to preach at Cocabe, a village beyond Jordan, where he dwelt; but he afterwards travelled into Asia, and thence to Rome. The authority of St. Simeon kept the

1 Eus. l. 3. c. 5. Epiph. hær. 29. c. 7. hær. 30. c. 2.
2 L. de Pond. et Mensur. c. 15. 3 Demonst. l. 3. c. 5.

heretics in some awe during his life, which was the longest upon earth of any of our Lord's disciples. But, as Eusebius says, he was no sooner dead than a deluge of execrable heresies broke out of hell upon the church, which durst not openly appear during his life.

Vespasian and Domitian had commanded all to be put to death who were of the race of David. St. Simeon had escaped their searches; but Trajan having given the same order, certain heretics and Jews accused him, as being both of the race of David and a Christian, to Atticus, the Roman governor in Palestine. The holy bishop was condemned by him to be crucified: who, after having undergone the usual tortures during several days, which, though one hundred and twenty years old, he suffered with so much patience that he drew on him an universal admiration, and that of Atticus in particular, he died in 107, according to Eusebius in his chronicle, but in 116, according to Dodwell, bishop Loyde, and F. Pagi. He must have governed the church of Jerusalem about forty-three years.

The eminent saints among the primitive disciples of Jesus Christ, were entirely animated by his spirit, and being dead to the world and themselves, they appeared like angels among men. Free from the secret mixture of the sinister views of all passions, to a degree which was a miracle of grace, they had in all things only God, his will and honour before their eyes, equally aspiring to him through honour and infamy. In the midst of human applause they remained perfectly humble in the centre of their own nothing: when loaded with reproaches and contempt, and persecuted with all the rage that malice could inspire, they were raised above all these things so as to stand fearless amidst racks and executioners, inflexibly constant in their fidelity to God, before tyrants, invincible under torments,

and superior to them almost as if they had been impassible. Their resolution never failed them, their fervour seemed never slackened. Such wonderful men wrought continual miracles in converting souls to God. We bear the name of Christians, and wear the habit of Saints; but are full of the spirit of worldlings, and our actions are infected with its poison. We secretly seek ourselves, even when we flatter ourselves that God is our only aim, and whilst we undertake to convert the world, we suffer it to pervert us. When shall we begin to study to crucify our passions and die to ourselves, that we may lay a solid foundation of true virtue and establish its reign in our hearts?

SS. LEO AND PAREGORIUS, MARTYRS.

From their ancient authentic acts in Ruinart, Bollandus, &c.

THIRD AGE.

St. Paregorius having spilt his blood for the faith at Patara, in Lycia, St. Leo, who had been a witness of his conflict, found his heart divided between joy for his friend's glorious victory, and sorrow to see himself deprived of the happiness of sharing in it. The proconsul of Asia being absent in order to wait on the emperors, probably Valerian and Galien, the governor of Lycia, residing at Patara, to show his zeal for the idols, published an order on the festival of Serapis, to oblige all to offer sacrifice to that false god. Leo seeing the heathens out of superstition, and some Christians out of fear, going in crowds to adore the idol, sighed within himself, and went to offer up his prayers to the true God, on the tomb of St. Paregorius, to which he passed before the temple of Serapis, it lying in his way to the martyr's tomb. The heathens that were sacrificing in it knew him to be a Christian by his modesty. He had exercised himself from his childhood in the

austerities and devotions of an ascetic life, and possessed, in an eminent degree, chastity, temperance, and all other virtues. His clothes were of a coarse cloth made of camel's hair. Not long after his return home from the tomb of the martyr, with his mind full of the glorious exit of his friend, he fell asleep, and from a dream he had on that occasion, understood, when he awaked, that God called him to a conflict of the same kind with that of St. Paregorius, which filled him with inexpressible joy and comfort.

Wherefore the next time he visited the martyr's tomb, instead of going to the place through by-roads, he went boldly through the market-place, and by the Tychæum, or temple of Fortune, which he saw illuminated with lanterns. He pitied their blindness; and, being moved with zeal for the honour of the true God, he made no scruple to break as many of the lanterns as were within reach, and trampled on the tapers in open view, saying, "Let your gods revenge the injury if they are able to do it." The priest of the idol having raised the populace, cried out, "Unless this impiety be punished, the goddess Fortune will withdraw her protection from the city." An account of this affair soon reached the ears of the governor, who ordered the saint to be brought before him, and on his appearance addressed him in this manner: "Wicked wretch, thy sacrilegious action surely bespeaks thee either ignorant of the immortal gods, or downright mad, in flying in the face of our most divine emperors, whom we justly regard as secondary deities and saviours." The martyr replied with great calmness, "You are under a great mistake, in supposing a plurality of gods: there is but one, who is the God of heaven and earth, and who does not stand in need of being worshipped after that gross manner that men worship idols. The most acceptable sacrifice we can offer him is that of a contrite

and humble heart." "Answer to your indictment," said the governor, "and dont preach your Christianity. I thank the gods, however, that they have not suffered you to lie concealed after such a sacrilegious attempt. Choose therefore either to sacrifice to them, with those that are here present, or to suffer the punishment due to your impiety." The martyr said, "The fear of torments shall never draw me from my duty. I am ready to suffer all you shall inflict. All your tortures cannot reach beyond death. Eternal life is not to be attained but by the way of tribulations; the scripture accordingly informs us, *that narrow is the way that leadeth to life.*" "Since you own the way you walk in is narrow," said the governor, "exchange it for ours, which is broad and commodious." "When I called it narrow," said the martyr, "this was only because it is not entered without difficulty, and that its beginnings are often attended with afflictions and persecutions for justice sake. But being once entered, it is not difficult to keep in it by the practice of virtue, which helps to widen it and render it easy to those that persevere in it, which has been done by many."

The multitude of Jews and Gentiles cried out to the judge to silence him. But he said, he allowed him liberty of speech, and even offered him his friendship if he would but sacrifice. The confessor answered, "You seem to have forgot what I just before told you, or you would not have urged me again to sacrifice. Would you have me acknowledge for a deity that which has nothing in its nature of divine?" These last words put the governor in a rage, and he ordered the saint to be scourged. Whilst the executioners were tearing his body unmercifully, the judge said to him, "This is nothing to the torments I am preparing for you. If you would have me stop here, you must sacrifice." Leo said, "O

judge, I will repeat to you again what I have so often told you, I own not your gods, nor will I ever sacrifice to them." The judge said, "Only say the gods are great, and I will discharge you. I really pity your old age." Leo answered, "If I allow them that title, it can only be with regard to their power of destroying their worshippers." The judge in a fury said, "I will cause you to be dragged over rocks and stones, till you are torn to pieces." Leo said, "Any kind of death is welcome to me, that procures me the kingdom of heaven, and introduces me into the company of the blessed." The judge said, "Obey the edict, and say, the gods are the preservers of of the world, or you shall die." The martyr answered, "You do nothing but threaten: why dont you proceed to effects?" The mob began to be clamorous, and the governor, to appease them, was forced to pronounce sentence on the saint, which was, that he should be tied by the feet, and dragged to the torrent, and there executed; and his orders were immediately obeyed in a most cruel manner. The martyr being upon the point of consummating his sacrifice, and obtaining the accomplishment of all his desires, with his eyes lifted up to heaven, prayed thus aloud: "I thank thee, O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for not suffering me to be long separated from thy servant Paregorius. I rejoice in what has befallen me as the means of expiating my past sins. I commend my soul to the care of thy holy angels, to be placed by them where it will have nothing to fear from the judgments of the wicked. But thou, O Lord, who willest not the death of a sinner, but his repentance, grant them to know thee, and to find pardon for their crimes, through the merits of thy only Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." He no sooner repeated the word Amen, together with an act of thanksgiving, but he expired.

His executioners then took the body and cast it down a great precipice into a deep pit; and notwithstanding the fall it seemed only to have received a few slight bruises. The very place which was before a frightful precipice, seemed to have changed its nature; and the acts say, no more dangers or accidents happened in it to travellers. The Christians took up the martyr's body, and found it of a lively colour, and entire, and his face appeared comely and smiling; and they buried it in the most honourable manner they could. The Greeks keep his festival on the 18th of February.

FEBRUARY XIX.

ST. BARBATUS, OR BARBAS, C.

BISHOP OF BENEVENTO.

From his two authentic lives in Bollandus, t.

A. D. 682.

St. Barbatus was born in the territory of Benevento, in Italy, toward the end of the pontificate of St. Gregory the Great, in the beginning of the seventh century. His parents gave him a Christian education, and Barbatus in his youth laid the foundation of that eminent sanctity, which recommends him to our veneration. Devout meditation on the holy scriptures was his chief entertainment; and the innocence, simplicity, and purity of his manners, and extraordinary progress in all virtues, qualified him for the service of the altar, to which he was assumed by taking holy orders as soon as the canons of the church would allow it. He was immediately employed by his bishop in preaching, for which he had an extraordinary talent; and, after some time, made curate of St. Basil's, in Morcona, a

town near Benevento. His parishioners were steeled in their irregularities, and averse from whatever looked like establishing order and discipline amongst them. As they desired only to slumber on in their sins, they could not bear the remonstrances of their pastor, who endeavoured to awake them to a sense of their miseries, and to sincere repentance: they treated him as a disturber of their peace, and persecuted him with the utmost violence. Finding their malice conquered by his patience and humility, and his character shining still more bright, they had recourse to slanders, in which, such was their virulence and success, that he was obliged to withdraw his charitable endeavours amongst them. By these fiery trials, God purified his heart from all earthly attachments, and perfectly crucified it to the world. Barbatus returned to Benevento, where he was received with joy by those who were acquainted with his innocence and sanctity. The seed of Christianity had been first sown at Benevento by St. Potin, who is said to have been sent thither by St. Peter, and is looked upon as the first bishop of this see. We have no names of his successors till St. Januarius, by whom this church was exceedingly increased, and who was honoured with the crown of martyrdom in 305. Totila, the Goth, laid the city of Benevento in ruins, in 545. The Lombards having possessed themselves of that country, repaired it, and king Autharis gave it to Zotion, a general among those invaders, with the title of a duchy, about the year 598, and his successors governed it, as sovereign dukes, for several ages. These Lombards were at that time chiefly Arians; but among them there remained many idolaters, and several at Benevento had embraced the Catholic faith, even before the death of St. Gregory the Great, with their duke Arichis, a warm friend of that holy pope. But when St. Barbatus entered upon

his ministry in that city, the Christians themselves retained many idolatrous superstitions, which even their duke, or prince Romuald, authorised by his example, though son of Grimoald, king of the Lombards, who had edified all Italy by his conversion. They expressed a religious veneration to a golden viper, and prostrated themselves before it: they paid also a superstitious honour to a tree, on which they hung the skin of a wild beast, and these ceremonies were closed by public games, in which the skin served for a mark at which bowmen shot arrows over their shoulder. St. Barbatus preached zealously against these abuses, and laboured long to no purpose: yet desisted not, but joined his exhortations with fervent prayer and rigorous fasting, for the conversion of this unhappy people. At length he roused their attention by foretelling the distress of their city, and the calamities which it was to suffer from the army of the emperor Constans, who landing soon after in Italy, laid siege to Benevento. In their extreme distress, and still more grievous alarms and fears, they listened to the holy preacher, and, entering into themselves, renounced their errors and idolatrous practices. Hereupon St. Barbatus gave them the comfortable assurance that the siege should be raised, and the emperor worsted: which happened as he had foretold. Upon their repentance, the saint with his own hand cut down the tree, which was the object of their superstition, and afterward melted down the golden viper which they adored, of which he made a chalice for the use of the altar. Ildebrand, bishop of Benevento, dying during the siege, after the public tranquillity was restored, St. Barbatus was consecrated bishop on the 10th of March, 663; for this see was only raised to the archiepiscopal dignity by John XIII. about the year 965. Barbatus, being invested with the episcopal cha-

racter, pursued and completed the good work which he had so happily begun, and destroyed every trace or the least remain of superstition in the prince's closet, and in the whole state. In the year 680 he assisted in a council held by pope Agatho at Rome, and the year following in the sixth general council held at Constantinople against the Monothelites. He did not long survive this great assembly, for he died on the 29th of February, 682, being about seventy years old, almost nineteen of which he had spent in the episcopal chair. He is named in the Roman Martyrology, and honoured at Benevento among the chief patrons of that city.

Many sinners are moved by alarming sensible dangers or calamities to enter into themselves, on whom the terrors of the divine judgment make very little impression. The reason can only be a supine neglect of serious reflections, and a habit of considering them only transiently, and as at a distance; for it is impossible for any one who believes these great truths, if he takes a serious review of them, and has them present to his mind, to remain insensible: transient glances effect not a change of heart. Amongst the pretended conversions which sickness daily produces, very few bear the characters of sincerity, as appears by those who, after their recovery, live on in their former lukewarmness and disorders.[1] St. Austin, in a sermon which he made upon the news that Rome had been sacked by the barbarians, relates,[2] that not long before, at Constantinople, upon the appearance of an unusual meteor, and a rumour of a pretended prediction that the city would be destroyed by fire from heaven, the inhabitants were seized with a panic fear, all began to do penance like Ninive, and fled, with the em-

1 The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be;
The devil was well, the devil no monk was he.

2 S. Aug. Serm. de Excidio Urbis, c. 6. t. 6. p. 627. ed. Ben

peror at their head, to a great distance from the city. After the term appointed for its pretended destruction was elapsed, they sent scouts to the city which they had left quite empty, and, hearing that it was still standing, returned to it, and with their fears forgot their repentance and all their good resolutions. To prevent the danger of penitents imposing upon themselves by superficial conversions, St. Barbatus took all necessary precautions to improve their first dispositions to a sincere and perfect change of heart, and to cut off and remove all dangerous occasions of temptations.

FEBRUARY XX.

SS. TYRANNIO, BISHOP OF TYRE,

ZENOBIUS AND OTHERS, MARTYRS IN PHŒNICIA, &C.

From Eusebius, Hist. l. 8. St. Jerom in Chron. Euseb.

A. D. 304. 310.

EUSEBIUS, the parent of church history, and an eye-witness of what he relates concerning these martyrs, gives the following account of them: "Several Christians of Egypt, whereof some had settled in Palestine, others at Tyre, gave astonishing proofs of their patience and constancy in the faith. After innumerable stripes and blows, which they cheerfully underwent, they were exposed to wild beasts, such as leopards, wild bears, boars, and bulls. I myself was present, when these savage creatures, accustomed to human blood, being let out upon them, instead of devouring them, or tearing them to pieces, as it was natural to expect, stood off, refusing even to touch or approach them, at the same time that they fell foul on their keepers, and others that

came in their way.[1] The soldiers of Christ were the only persons they refused, though these martyrs, pursuant to the order given them, tossed about their arms, which was thought a ready way to provoke the beasts, and stir them up against them. Sometimes, indeed, they were perceived to rush towards them with their usual impetuosity, but, withheld by a divine power, they suddenly withdrew; and this many times, to the great admiration of all present. The first having done no execution, others were a second and a third time let out upon them, but in vain; the martyrs standing all the while unshaken, though many of them very young. Among them was a youth not yet twenty, who had his eyes lifted up to heaven, and his arms extended in the form of a cross, not in the least daunted, nor trembling, nor shifting his place, while the bears and leopards, with their jaws wide open, threatening immediate death, seemed just ready to tear him to pieces; but, by a miracle, not being suffered to touch him, they speedily withdrew. Others were exposed to a furious bull, which had already gored and tossed into the air several infidels who had ventured too near, and left them half dead: only the martyrs he could not approach; he stopped, and stood scraping the dust with his feet, and though he seemed to endeavour it with his utmost might, butting with his horns on every side, and pawing the ground with his feet, being also urged on by red hot iron goads, it was all to no purpose. After repeated trials of this kind

1 Rufinus adds, that these beasts killed several of the keepers and spectators. It is in this sense that some have translated this passage with Nicephorus. See Vales. in Annot. p. 165. But it seems improbable that the spectators, who were separated from the arena by iron rails, and seated on stone benches gradually ascending ten or twenty men deep all round, should be killed or injured by the beasts, unless some were so rash as to venture within the rails with the keepers; which we see several do in the combats of wild beasts. This, therefore, we are to restrain to the keepers and those who kept them company.

with other wild beasts, with as little success as the former, the saints were slain by the sword, and their bodies cast into the sea. Others who refused to sacrifice were beaten to death, or burned, or executed divers other ways." This happened in the year 304, under Veturius, a Roman general, in the reign of Dioclesian.

The church on this day commemorates the other holy martyrs, whose crown was deferred till 310. The principal of these was St. Tyrannio, bishop of Tyre, who had been present at the glorious triumph of the former, and encouraged them in their conflict. He had not the comfort to follow them till six years after; when, being conducted from Tyre to Antioch, with St. Zenobius, a holy priest and physician of Sidon, after many torments he was thrown into the sea, or rather into the river Orontes, upon which Antioch stands, at twelve miles distance from the sea. Zenobius expired on the rack, whilst his sides and body were furrowed and laid open with iron hooks and nails. St. Sylvanus, bishop of Emisa, in Phœnicia, was, some time after, under Maximinus, devoured by wild beasts in the midst of his own city, with two companions, after having governed that church forty years. Peleus and Nilus, two other Egyptian priests, in Palestine, were consumed by fire with some others. St. Sylvanus, bishop of Gaza, was condemned to the copper mines of Phœnon, near Petra, in Arabia, and afterward beheaded there with thirty-nine others.

St. Tyrannio is commemorated on the 20th of February, in the Roman Martyrology, with those who suffered under Veturius, at Tyre, in 304. St. Zenobius, the priest and physician of Sidon, who suffered with him at Antioch, on the 29th of October: St. Sylvanus of Emisa, to whom the Menology gives many companions, on the 6th of February: St. Sylvanus of Gaza, on the 29th of May.

The love of Christ triumphed in the hearts of so many glorious martyrs, upon racks, in the midst of boiling furnaces, or flames, and in the claws or teeth of furious wild beasts. How many inflamed with his love have forsaken all things to follow him, despising honours, riches, pleasures, and the endearments of worldly friends, to take up their crosses, and walk with constancy in the narrow paths of a most austere penitential life! We also pretend to love him: but what effect has this love upon us? what fruit does it produce in our lives? If we examine our own hearts, we shall be obliged to confess that we have great reason to fear that we deceive ourselves. What pains do we take to rescüe our souls from the slavery of the world, and the tyranny of self-love, to purge our affections of vice, or to undertake any thing for the divine honour, and the sanctification of our souls? Let us earnestly entreat our most merciful Redeemer, by the power of this his holy love, to triumph over all his enemies, which are our unruly passions, in our souls, and perfectly to subdue our stubborn hearts to its empire. Let it be our resolution, from this moment, to renounce the love of the world, and all self-love, to seek and obey him alone.

S. SADOTH, BISHOP OF SELEUCIA

AND CTESIPHON, WITH 128 COMPANIONS, MARTYRS.

From his genuine acts in Metaphrastes, Bollandus, &c.

A. D. 342.

SADOTH, as he is called by the Greeks and Latins, is named in the original Persian language, Schiadustes, which signifies "friend of the king," from *schiah*, king, and *dust*, friend. His unspotted purity of heart, his ardent zeal, and the practice of all Christian virtues, prepared him from his youth, for the episcopal dignity, and the

crown of martyrdom. Saint Simeon, bishop of Selec, or Seleucia, and Ctesiphon, then the two capital cities of Persia, situate on the river Tigris, being translated to glory by martyrdom, in the beginning of the persecution raised by Sapor II., in 341, Saint Sadoth was chosen three months after to fill his see, the most important in that empire, but the most exposed to the storm. This grew more violent on the publication of a new edict against the Christians, which made it capital to confess Christ. To wait with patience the manifestation of the divine will, St. Sadoth, with part of his clergy, lay hid for some time; which did not however hinder him from affording his distressed flock all proper assistance and encouragement, but rather enabled him to do it with the greater fruit. During this retreat he had a vision which seemed to indicate that the time was come for the holy bishop to seal his faith with his blood. This he related to his priests and deacons, whom he assembled for that purpose. "I saw," said he, "in my sleep, a ladder environed with light, and reaching from earth to the heavens. St. Simeon was at the top of it, and in great glory. He beheld me at the bottom, and said to me, with a smiling countenance, 'Mount up, Sadoth, fear not. I mounted yesterday, and it is your turn to-day:' which means, that as he was slain last year, so I am to follow him this." He was not wanting on this occasion to exhort his clergy, with great zeal and fervour, to make a provision of good works, and employ well their time, till they should be called on in like manner, that they might be in readiness to take possession of their inheritance. "A man that is guided by the Spirit," says St. Maruthas, author of these acts, "fears not death: he loves God, and goes to him with an incredible ardour; but he who lives according to the desires of the flesh, trembles, and

is in despair at its approach: he loves the world, and it is with grief that he leaves it."

The second year of the persecution, king Sapor coming to Seleucia, Sadoth was apprehended, with several of his clergy, some ecclesiastics of the neighbourhood, and certain monks and nuns belonging to his church, to the amount of one hundred and twenty-eight persons. They were thrown into dungeons, where, during five months' confinement, they suffered incredible misery and torments. They were thrice called out, and put to the rack or question; their legs were straight bound with cords, which were drawn with so much violence, that their bones breaking, were heard to crack like sticks in a faggot. Amidst these tortures the officers cried out to them, "Adore the sun, and obey the king, if you would save your lives." Sadoth answered in the name of all, that the sun was but a creature, the work of God, made for the use of mankind, that they would pay supreme adoration to none but the Creator of heaven and earth, and never be unfaithful to him; that it was indeed in their power to take away their lives, but that this would be the greatest favour they could do them; wherefore he conjured them not to spare them, or delay their execution. The officers said, "Obey! or know that your death is certain and immediate." The martyrs all cried out with one voice, "We shall not die, but live and reign eternally with God and his Son Jesus Christ. Wherefore inflict death as soon as you please; for we repeat it to you that we will not adore the sun, nor obey the unjust edicts." Then sentence of death was pronounced upon them all by the king: for which they thanked God, and mutually encouraged each other. They were chained two and two together, and led out of the city to execution, singing psalms and canticles of joy as they went. Being arrived at the place of their martyrdom, they

raised their voices still higher, blessing and thanking God for his mercy in bringing them thither, and begging the grace of perseverance, and that by this baptism of their blood they might enter into his glory. These prayers and praises of God did not cease but with the life of the last of this blessed company. St. Sadoth, by the king's orders, was separated from them, and sent into the province of the Huzites, where he was beheaded. He thus rejoined his happy flock in the kingdom of glory. Ancient Chaldaic writers quoted by Assemani say, St. Schiadustes, or Sadoth, was nephew to Simeon Barsaboe, being son to his sister. He governed his church only eight months, and finished his martyrdom after five months' imprisonment, in the year 342, and of king Sapor II. the thirty-third.

These martyrs are honoured in the Roman Martyrology on this day.

T. ELEUTHERIUS, MARTYR,

BISHOP OF TOURNAY.

A. D. 532.

He was born at Tournay, of Christian parents, whose family had been converted to Christ by St. Piat, one hundred and fifty years before. The faith had declined at Tournay ever since St. Piat's martyrdom, by reason of its commerce with the heathen islands of Taxandria, now Zealand, and by means of the heathen French kings, who resided some time at Tournay. Eleutherius was chosen bishop of that city, in 486; ten years after which king Clovis was baptized at Rheims. Eleutherius converted the greatest part of the Franks in that country to the faith, and opposed most zealously certain heretics who denied the mystery of the Incarnation, by whom he was wounded on the head with a sword, and died of the wound five weeks after, on the first of July, in

532. The most ancient monuments, relating to this saint, seem to have perished in a great fire which consumed his church, and many other buildings, at Tournay, in 1092, with his relics. See Miræus, and his life written in the ninth century, extant in Bolladus, p. 187.[1] Of the sermons ascribed to St. Eleutherius, in the Library of the Fathers, t. 8. none seem sufficiently warranted genuine, except three on the Incarnation and Birth of Christ, and the Annuciation. See Dom Rivet, Hist. Liter. t. 3.

ST. MILDRED, V. ABBESS.

EORMENBURGA,[2] pronounced Ermenburga, otherwise Domneva, was married to Merwald, a son of king Penda, and had by him three daughters and a son, who all consecrated their whole estates to pious uses, and were all honoured by our ancestors among the saints. Their names were Milburg, Mildred, Mildgithe, and Mervin. King Egbert caused his two nephews, Etheldred and Ethelbright, to be secretly murdered in the isle of Thanet. Count Thunor, whom he had charged with that execrable commission, buried the bodies of the two princes under the king's

1 This author wrote before the invasion of the Normans, and the translation of the saint's relics: but long after the saint's death, and by making him born in the reign of Dioclesian, yet contemporary with St. Medard, destroys his own credit. Some years after, another author much enlarged this life, and inserted a history of the translation of the relics of this saint made in 897. A third writer added a relation of later miracles, and of the translation of these relics into the city of Tournay, in 1164. All these authors deserve little notice, except in relating facts of their own time.

2 Eadbald, king of Kent, had by his queen Emma, daughter to a king of the French, St. Eanswithe (whose relics were venerated at Folkstone, till the change of religion) and two sons, Eorcombert (afterward king) and Eormenred, surnamed Clito. This last left four children by his wife Oslave, namely, Eormenburga and St. Eormengitha, with two sons, St. Ethelred and St. Ethelbright. King Eorcombert had, by his queen Sexburga, Egbert and Lothaire, successively kings, and St. Eormenilda, and St. Ercongota. Eormenburga was surnamed Moldeva, as we are assured by the ancient English Saxon account of these saints, published by Hickes; though Capgrave frequently speaks of them as different women.

throne in the royal palace at Estrage, now called Estria. The king is said to have been miraculously terrified by seeing a ray of bright light dart from the heavens upon their grave, and in sentiments of compunction he sent for their sister, Eormenburga, out of Mercia, to pay her the weregild, which was the mulct for a murder, ordained by the laws to be paid to the relations of the persons deceased. In satisfaction for the murder, he settled on her forty-eight ploughs of land, which she employed in founding a monastery, in which prayers might be continually put up to God for the repose of the souls of the two princes. This pious establishment was much promoted by the king, and thus the monastery was founded about the year 670; not 596, as Leland[1] and Speed mistake. The monastery was called Menstrey, or rather Minstre, in the isle of Thanet. Domneva sent her daughter Mildred to the abbey of Chelles, in France, where she took the religious veil, and was thoroughly instructed in all the duties of that state, the perfect spirit of which she had imbibed from her tender years. Upon her return to England she was consecrated first abbess of Minstre in Thanet, by St. Theodorus, archbishop of Canterbury, and at the same time received to the habit seventy chosen virgins. She behaved herself by humility as the servant of her sisters, and conducted them to virtue by the authority of her example, for all were ashamed not to imitate her watching, mortification, and prayer, and not to walk according to her spirit. Her aunt, Ermengitha, served God in the same house with such fervour, that after her death she was ranked among the saints, and her tomb, situated a mile from the monastery, was famous for the resort of devout pilgrims. St. Mildred died of a lingering painful illness, towards the close of the seventh

1 Leland, Collect. t. 1. p. 97.

century. This great monastery was often plundered by the Danes, and the nuns and clerks murdered, chiefly in the years 980 and 1011. After the last of these burnings, here were no more nuns, but only a few secular priests. In 1033, the remains of St. Mildred were translated to the monastery of St. Austin's at Canterbury, and venerated above all the relics of that holy place, says Malmesbury,[1] who testifies frequent miracles to have been wrought by them: Thorn and others confirm the same. Two churches in London bear her name. See Thorn's Chronicle, inter Decem Scriptores, coll. 1770. 1783. 1906. Harpsfield.

ST. EUCHERIUS, BISHOP OF ORLEANS. C.

Our saint's mother, who was a lady of eminent virtue, and of the first quality at Orleans, while she was with child of him made a daily offering of him to God, and begged nothing for him but divine grace. When he was born, his parents dedicated him to God, and set him to study when he was but seven years old, resolving to omit nothing that could be done toward cultivating his mind, or forming his heart. His improvement in virtue kept pace with his progress in learning: he meditated assiduously on the sacred writings, especially on St. Paul's manner of speaking on the world, and its enjoyments, as mere empty shadows, that deceive us and vanish away; and took particular notice that the apostle says, the wisdom of those who love the pleasures and riches of this life is no better than folly before God.[2] These reflections at length sunk so deep into his mind, that he resolved to quit the world. To put this design in execution, about the year 714, he retired to the abbey of Jumiege, on the banks of

1 L. 2. de Reg. Angl. c. 13. 2 1 Cor. vii. 31. iii. 19.

the Seine, in the diocess of Rouen. When he had spent six or seven years here in the practice of penitential austerities and obedience, Suavaric, his uncle, bishop of Orleans died: the senate and people, with the clergy of that city, deputed persons to Charles Martel, mayor of the palace, to beg his permission to elect Eucherius to the vacant see. That prince granted their request, and sent with them one of his principal officers of state to conduct him from his monastery to Orleans. The saint's affliction at their arrival was inexpressible, and he entreated the monks to screen him from the dangers that threatened him. But they preferred the public good to their private inclinations, and resigned him up for that important charge. He was received at Orleans, and consecrated with universal applause, in 721. Though he received the episcopal character with grievous apprehensions of its obligations and dangers, he was not discouraged, but had recourse to the supreme pastor for assistance in the discharge of his duties, and devoted himself entirely to the care of his church. He was indefatigable in instructing and reforming his flock, and his zeal and even reproofs were attended with so much sweetness and charity, that it was impossible not to love and obey him. Charles Martel, to defray the expenses of his wars and other undertakings, and to recompense those that served him, often stripped the churches of their revenues, and encouraged others to do the same. St. Eucherius reproved these encroachments with so much zeal, that flatterers represented it to the prince as an insult offered to his person; therefore, in the year 737, Charles in his return to Paris, after having defeated the Saracens in Aquitain, took Orleans in his way, ordered Eucherius to follow him to Verneuil upon the Oise, in the diocess of Beauvais, where he then kept his court, and banished him to Cologn. The extraordinary esteem which

his virtue procured him in that city, moved Charles to order him to be conveyed thence to a strong place in Hasbain, now called Haspengaw, in the territory of Liege, under the guard of Robert, governor of that country. The governor was so charmed with his virtue, that he made him the distributer of his large alms, and allowed him to retire to the monastery of Sarchinium, or St. Tron's. Here prayer and contemplation were his whole employment, till the year 743, in which he died on the 20th of February. He is named in the Roman and other martyrologies.

See his original life by one of the same age, with the preliminary dissertation of Henschenius, and the remarks of Mabillon, sæc. 3. Ben. The pretended vision of the damnation of Charles Martel, is an evident interpolation, found only in later copies, and in Surius.

ST. ULRICK, A RECLUSE.

He was born near Bristol, and being promoted to the priesthood, took great pleasure in hunting, till being touched by divine grace, he retired near Heselborough in Dorsetshire, where he led a most austere and holy life. He died on the 20th of February, in 1154. See Matthew Paris.

FEBRUARY XXI.

ST. SEVERIANUS, MARTYR,

BISHOP OF SCYTHOPOLIS.

rom the life of St. Euthymius; a letter of Marcian; Evagrius.

A. D. 452, or 453.

In the reign of Marcian and St. Pulcheria, the council of Chalcedon which condemned the Eutychian heresy, was received by St. Euthymius, and by a great part of the monks of Palestine. But Theodosius, an ignorant Eutychian monk, and a man of a most tyrannical temper, under the

protection of the empress Eudoxia, widow of Theodosius the Younger, who lived at Jerusalem, perverted many among the monks themselves, and having obliged Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem, to withdraw, unjustly possessed himself of that important see, and in a cruel persecution which he raised, filled Jerusalem with blood, as the emperor Marcian assures us: then, at the head of a band of soldiers, he carried desolation over the country. Many however had the courage to stand their ground. No one resisted him with greater zeal and resolution than Severianus, bishop of Scythopolis, and his recompense was the crown of martyrdom; for the furious soldiers seized his person, dragged him out of the city, and massacred him in the latter part of the year 452, or in the beginning of the year 453. His name occurs in the Roman Martyrology, on the 21st of February.

Palestine, the country which for above one thousand four hundred years had been God's chosen inheritance under the Old Law, when other nations were covered with the abominations of idolatry, had been sanctified by the presence, labours, and sufferings of our divine Redeemer, and had given birth to his church, and to so many saints, became often the theatre of enormous scandals, and has now, for many ages, been enslaved to the most impious and gross superstition. So many flourishing churches in the East, which were planted by the labours of the chiefest among the apostles, watered with the blood of innumerable glorious martyrs, illustrated with the bright light of the Ignatiuses, the Polycarps, the Basils, the Ephrems, and the Chrysostoms, blessed by the example and supported by the prayers of legions of eminent saints, are fallen a prey to almost universal vice and infidelity. With what floods of tears can we sufficiently bewail so grievous a misfortune, and implore the

divine mercy in behalf of so many souls! How ought we to be alarmed at the consideration of so many dreadful examples of God's inscrutable judgments and tremble for ourselves! *Let him who stands beware lest he fall. Hold fast what thou hast*, says the oracle of the Holy Ghost to every one of us, *lest another bear away thy crown.*

SS. GERMAN, ABBOT OF GRANFEL,

AND RANDAUT, OR RANDOALD, MARTYRS.

From their acts, written by the priest Babolen in the same age, in Bollandus.

ABOUT THE YEAR 666.

St. German, or Germanus, was son of a rich senator of Triers, and brought up from the cradle under the care of Modoald, bishop of Triers. At seventeen years of age, he gave all he could dispose of to the poor, and with Modoald's consent applied himself to St. Arnoul, who having resigned his dignities of bishop of Metz, and minister of state under Dagobert, then led an eremitical life in a desert in Lorrain, near Romberg, or Remiremont. That great saint, charmed with the innocence and fervour of the tender young nobleman, received him in the most affectionate manner, and gave him the monastic tonsure. Under such a master the holy youth made great progress, in a spiritual life, and after some time, having engaged a younger brother, called Numerian, to forsake the world, he went with him to Romberg, or the monastery of St. Romaric, a prince of royal blood, who, resigning the first dignity and rank which he enjoyed in the court of king Theodebert, had founded in his own castle, in concert with his friend St. Arnoul, a double house, one larger for nuns, the other less for monks; both known since under the name of Remiremont, situated on a part of Mount Vosge. St. Romaric

died in 653, and is named in the Roman Martyrology on the 8th of December, on which his festival is kept at Remiremont, and that of the Blessed Virgin deferred to the day following. He settled here the rule of Luxeu, or of St. Columban.[1] St. German made the practices of all manner of humiliations, penance, and religion, the object of his earnest ambition, and out of a desire of greater spiritual advancement, after some time passed with his brother to the monastery of Luxeu, then governed by the holy abbot, St. Walbert. Duke Gondo, one of the principal lords of Alsace, having founded a monastery in the diocess of Basil, called the Great Valley, in German, Granfel, and now more commonly Munster-thal, or the Monastery of the Valley. St. Walbert appointed St. German abbot of the colony which he settled there. Afterward the two monasteries of Ursiein, commonly called St. Ursitz, and of St. Paul Zu-Werd, or of the island, were also put under his direction, though he usually resided at Granfel. Catihe, called also Boniface, who succeeded Gondo in the dutchy, inherited no share of his charity and religion, and oppressed both the monks and poor inhabitants with daily acts of violence and arbitrary tyranny. The holy abbot bore all private injuries in silence, but often pleaded the cause of the poor. The duke had thrown the magistrates of several villages into prison, and many ways distressed the other inhabitants, laying waste their lands at pleasure, and destroying all the fruits of their toil, and all the means of their poor subsistence. As he was one day ravaging their lands

1 Remiremont was destroyed in the tenth century by the Hungarians or New Huns, but rebuilt in the reign of Lewis III. in the plain beyond the Moselle, at the bottom of the mountain, where a town is formed. It has been, if not from its restoration, at least for several centuries, a noble collegiate church for canonesses, who make proof of nobility for two hundred years, but can marry if they resign their prebends; except the abbess, who makes solemn religious vows.

and plundering their houses at the head of a troop of soldiers, St. German went out to meet him, to entreat him to spare a distressed and innocent people. The duke listened to his remonstrances and promised to desist; but whilst the saint staid to offer up his prayers in the church of Saint Maurice, the soldiers fell again to killing, burning and plundering: and whilst St. German was on his road to return to Granfel, with his companion Randoald, commonly called Randaut, they first stripped them, and then, whilst they were at their prayers, pierced them both with lances, about the year 666. Their relics were deposited at Granfel, and were exposed in a rich shrine till the change of religion, since which time the canonries, into which this monastery was converted, are removed to Telsberg, or Delmont.

SS. DANIEL, PRIEST, AND VERDA,

VIRGIN, MARTYRS.

From their authentic acts, wrote by St. Maruthas, in Syriac, and published by Stephen Assemani among the Oriental Martyrs, t. 1. p. 103.

A. D. 344.

Two years after the martyrdom of St. Milles, Daniel, a priest, and a virgin consecrated to God, named Verda, which in Chaldaic signifies a rose, were apprehended in the province of the Razicheans, in Persia, by an order of the governor, and put to all manner of torments for three months, almost without intermission. Among other tortures, their feet being bored through, were put into frozen water for five days together. The governor, seeing it impossible to overcome their constancy, condemned them to lose their heads. They were crowned on the 25th of the moon of February, which was that year the 21st of that month, in the year of Christ 344, and of king Sapor II. the thirty-fifth. Their names

were not known either to the Greek or Latin martyrologists: and their illustrious triumph is recorded in few words by St. Maruthas, but was most glorious in the sight of heaven.

B. PEPIN OF LANDEN,

MAYOR OF THE PALACE TO THE KINGS CLOTAIRE II. DAGOBERT, AND SIGEBERT.

He was son of Carloman, the most powerful nobleman of Austrasia, who had been mayor to Clotaire I. son of Clovis I. He was grandfather to Pepin of Herstal, the most powerful mayor, whose son was Charles Martel, and grandson Pepin the Short, king of France, in whom begun the Carlovingian race. Pepin of Landen, upon the river Geete, in Brabant, was a lover of peace, the constant defender of truth and justice, a true friend to all servants of God, the terror of the wicked, the support of the weak, the father of his country, the zealous and humble defender of religion. He was lord of great part of Brabant, and governor of Austrasia, when Theodebert II. king of that country was defeated by Theodoric II. king of Burgundy, and soon after assassinated in 612, and Theodoric dying the year following, Clotaire II. king of Soissons, reunited Burgundy, Neustria, and Austrasia to his former dominions, and became sole monarch of France. For the pacific possession of Austrasia he was much indebted to Pepin, whom he appointed mayor of the palace to his son Dagobert I. when, in 622, he declared him king of Austrasia and Neustria. The death of Clotaire II. in 628, put him in possession of all France, except a small part of Aquitain, with Thoulouse, which was settled upon his younger brother, Charibert. When king Dagobert, forgetful of the maxims instilled into him in his youth, had given himself up to a shameful lust, this faithful minister boldly reproached him with

his ingratitude to God, and ceased not till he saw him a sincere and perfect penitent. This great king died in 638, and was buried at St. Denys's. He had appointed Pepin tutor to his son Sigebert from his cradle, and mayor of his palace when he declared him king of Austrasia, in 633. After the death of Dagobert, Clovis II. reigning in Burgundy and Neustria, (by whom Erchinoald was made mayor for the latter, and Flaochat for the former,) Pepin quitted the administration of those dominions, and resided at Metz, with Sigebert, who always considered him as his father, and under his discipline became himself a saint, and one of the most happy amongst all the French Kings. Pepin was married to the blessed Itta, of one of the first families in Aquitain, by whom he had a son called Grimoald, and two daughters, St. Gertrude, and St. Begga. The latter, who was the elder, was married to Ansigisus, son of St. Arnoul, to whom she bore Pepin of Herstal. B. Pepin, of Landen, died on the 21st of February, in 640. and was buried at Landen; but his body was afterward removed to Nivelle, where it is, now enshrined, as are those of the B. Itta, and St. Gertrude in the same place. His name stands in the Belgic martyrologies, though no other act of public veneration has been paid to his memory, than the enshrining of his relics, which are carried in processions. His name is found in a litany published by the authority of the archbishop of Mechlin. See Bollandus, t. 3. Febr. p. 250, and Dom Bouquet, Recueil des Hist. de France, t. 2. p. 603.

FEBRUARY XXII.

THE CHAIR OF SAINT PETER AT ANTIOCH.

See Baronius, Annot. in Martyrol. ad 18 Januarii, the Bollandists, ib. t. 2. p. 182. sect. 5 and 6. and especially Jos. Bianchini, Dissert. De Romanâ Cathedrâ in notis in Anastatium Biblioth. t. 4. p. 150.

That Saint Peter, before he went to Rome, founded the see of Antioch is attested by Eusebius,[1] Origen,[2] St. Jerom,[3] St. Innocent,[4] Pope Gelasius, in his Roman Council,[5] Saint Chrysostom, and others. It was just that the prince of the apostles should take this city under his particular care and inspection, which was then the capital of the East, and in which the faith took so early and so deep root as to give birth in it to the name of Christians. St. Chrysostom says, that St. Peter made there a long stay: St. Gregory the Great,[6] that he was seven years bishop of Antioch; not that he resided there all that time, but only that he had a particular care over that church. If he sat twenty-five years at Rome, the date of his establishing his chair at Antioch must be within three years after our Saviour's ascension; for in that supposition he must have gone to Rome in the second year of Claudius.

The festival of St. Peter's chair in general, Natale Petri de Cathedrâ, is marked on this day in the most ancient calendar extant, made in the time of pope Liberius, about the year 354.[7] It

1 Chron. and Hist. l. 3. c. 30. 2 Hom 6. in Luc.
3 In Catal. c. 1. 4 Ep. 18. t. 2. Conc. p. 1269.
5 Conc. t. 4. p. 1262. 6 Ep. 40. l. 7. t. 2. p. 888. Ed. Ben.
7 Some have imagined that the feast of the chair of St. Peter was not known, at least in Africa, in the fifth century, because it occurs not in the ancient calendar of Carthage. But how should the eighth day before the calends of March now appear in it, since the part is lost from the fourteenth before the calends of March to the eleventh before the calends of May? Hence St. Pontius, deacon, and martyr, on the eighth before the ides of March; St. Donatus, and some other African martyrs, are not there found. At least it is certain that it was kept at Rome long before that time. St. Leo preached a sermon

also occurs in Gregory's sacramentary, and in all the martyrologies. It was kept in France in the sixth century, as appears from the council of Tours,[1] and from Le Cointe.[2]

In the first ages it was customary, especially in the East, for every Christian to keep the anniversary of his baptism, on which he renewed his baptismal vows, and gave thanks to God for his heavenly adoption: this they called their spiritual birth-day. The bishops in like manner kept the anniversary of their own consecration, as appears from four sermons of St. Leo on the anniversary of his accession or assumption to the pontifical dignity; and this was frequently continued by the people after their decease, out of respect to their memory. St. Leo says, we ought to celebrate the chair of St. Peter with no less joy than the day of his martyrdom; for as in this he was exalted to a throne of glory in heaven, so by the former he was installed head of the church on earth.[3]

On this festival we are especially bound to adore and thank the divine goodness for the establishment and propagation of his church, and earnestly to pray that in his mercy he preserve the same, and dilate its pale, that his name may be glorified by all nations, and by all hearts, to the boundaries of the earth, for his divine honour and the salvation of souls, framed to his divine image, and the price of his adorable blood. The church of Christ is his spiritual kingdom: he is not only the architect and founder, but continues to govern it, and by his spirit, to animate its members to the end of the world as its invisible

on St. Peter's chair. (Serm. 100. t. 1. p. 235. ed. Rom.) Quesnel denied it to be genuine in his first edition; but in the second at Lyons, in 1700, he corrected this mistake, and proved this sermon to be St. Leo's; which is more fully demonstrated by Cacciari in his late Roman edition of St. Leo's works, t. 1. p. 285.

1 Can. 22. 2 Ad an. 566.

3 St. Leo, Serm. 100. in Cathedrâ S. Petri, t. 1. p. 285. ed. Romanæ.

head: though he has left in St. Peter and his successors a vicar, or lieutenant, as a visible head, with an established hierarchy for its exterior government. If we love him and desire his honour, if we love men on so many titles linked with us, can we cease weeping and praying, that by his sweet omnipotent grace he subdue all the enemies of his church, converting to it all infidels and apostates. In its very bosom sinners fight against him. Though these continue his members by faith, they are dead members, because he lives not in them by his grace and charity, reigns not in their hearts, animates them not with his spirit. He will indeed always live by grace and sanctity in many members of his mystical body. Let us pray that by the destruction of the tyranny of sin all souls may subject themselves to the reign of his holy love. Good Jesus! for your mercy's sake, hear me in this above all other petitions: never suffer me to be separated from you by forfeiting your holy love: may I remain always *rooted and grounded in your charity*, as is the will of your Father. Eph. iii.

ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA,

PENITENT.

From her life written by her confessor, in the Acta Sanctorum; by Bollandus, p. 298. Wadding, Annal. FF. Minorum ad an. 1297; and the Lives of the SS. of Third Ord. by Barb. t. 1. p. 508.

A. D. 1297.

Margaret was a native of Alviano, in Tuscany. The harshness of a step-mother, and her own indulged propension to vice, cast her headlong into the greatest disorders. The sight of the carcase of a man, half putrified, who had been her gallant, struck her with so great a fear of the divine judgements, and with so deep a sense of the treachery of this world, that she in a moment became a perfect penitent. The first thing she did was to throw herself at her father's feet,

bathed in tears, to beg his pardon for her contempt of his authority and fatherly admonitions. She spent the days and nights in tears: and to repair the scandal she had given by her crimes, she went to the parish church of Alviano, with a rope about her neck, and there asked public pardon for them. After this she repaired to Cortona, and made her most penitent confession to a father of the Order of St. Francis, who admired the great sentiments of compunction with which she was filled, and prescribed her austerities and practices suitable to her fervour. Her conversion happened in the year 1274, the twenty-fifth of her age. She was assaulted by violent temptations of various kinds, but courageously overcame them, and after a trial of three years, was admitted to her profession among the penitents of the third Order of St. Francis, in Cortona. The extraordinary austerities with which she punished her criminal flesh soon disfigured her body. To exterior mortification she joined all sorts of humiliations; and the confusion with which she was covered at the sight of her own sins, pushed her on continually to invent many extraordinary means of drawing upon herself all manner of confusion before men. This model of true penitents, after twenty-three years spent in severe penance, and twenty of them in the religious habit, being worn out by austerities, and consumed by the fire of divine love, died on the 22nd of February, in 1297.

After the proof of many miracles, Leo X. granted an office in her honour to the city of Cortona, which Urban VIII. extended to the whole Franciscan Order, in 1623; and she was canonized by Benedict XIII. in 1728.

SS. THALASSIUS AND LIMNEUS, CC.

They were cotemporaries with the great Theodoret, bishop of Cyr, and lived in his dio-

cess. The former dwelt in a cavern in a neighbouring mountain, and was endowed with extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, but was a treasure unknown to the world. His disciple St. Limneus was famous for miraculous cures of the sick, while he himself bore patiently the sharpest cholics and other distempers, without any human succour. He opened his enclosure only to Theodoret, his bishop, but spoke to others through a window.

See Theodoret, Phil. c. 22.

SAINT BARADAT, C.

He lived in the same diocess, in a solitary hut, made of wood in trellis, like windows, says Theodoret,[1] exposed to all the severities of the weather. He was clothed with the skins of wild beasts, and by conversing continually with God, he attained to an eminent degree of wisdom and knowledge of heavenly things. He left his wooden prison by the order of the patriarch of Antioch, giving a proof of his humility by his ready obedience. He studied to imitate all the practices of penance, which all the other solitaries of those parts exercised, though of a tender constitution himself. The fervour of his soul, and the fire of divine love, supported him under his incredible labours, though his body was weak and infirm. It is sloth that makes us so often allege a pretended weakness of constitution, in the practice of penance and the exercises of devotion, which courage and fervour would not even feel.

See Theodoret, Phil. c. 22. t. 3. p. 868. and c. 27.

1 This passage of Theodoret shows, that the windows of the ancients were made of trellis or wicker, before the invention of glass: though not universally; for in the ruins of Herculaneum, near Portichi, were found windows of a diaphanous thin slate, such as the rich in Rome sometimes used.

FEBRUARY XXIII.

ST. SERENUS, A GARDENER, MARTYR.

From his genuine acts in Ruinart, p. 546.

A. D. 327.

Serenus was by birth a Grecian. He quitted estate, friends, and country to serve God in an ascetic life, that is, in celibacy, penance, and prayer. Coming with this design to Sirmium, in Pannonia, or Hungary, he there bought a garden, which he cultivated with his own hands, and lived on the fruits and herbs it produced. The apprehension of the persecution made him hide himself for some months; after which he returned to his garden. On a certain day, there came thither a woman, with her two daughters, to walk. Serenus seeing them come up to him, "What do you seek here?" "I take a particular satisfaction," she replied, "in walking in this garden." "A lady of your quality," said Serenus, "ought not to walk here at unseasonable hours, and this you know is an hour you ought to be at home. Some other design brought you hither. Let me advise you to withdraw, and be more regular in your hours and conduct for the future, as decency requires in persons of your sex and condition." It was usual for the Romans to repose themselves at noon, as it is still the custom in Italy. The woman, stung at our saint's charitable remonstrance, retired in confusion, but resolved on revenging the supposed affront. She accordingly writes to her husband, who belonged to the guards of the emperor Maximian, to complain of Serenus as having insulted her. Her husband, on receiving her letter, went to the emperor to demand justice, and said, "Whilst we are waiting on your majesty's person, our wives in dis-

tant countries are insulted.". Whereupon the emperor gave him a letter to the governor of the province to enable him to obtain satisfaction. With this letter he set out for Sirmium, and presented it to the governor, conjuring him in the name of the emperor his master, to revenge the affront offered to him in the person of his wife during his absence. "And who is that insolent man," said the magistrate, "who durst insult such a gentleman's wife?" "It is," said he, "a vulgar pitiful fellow, one Serenus, a gardener." The governor ordered him to be immediately brought before him, and asked him his name. "It is Serenus," said he. The judge said, "Of what profession are you?" He answered, "I am a gardener." The governor said, "How durst you have the insolence and boldness to affront the wife of this officer?" Serenus: "I never insulted any woman, to my knowledge, in my life." The governor then said, "Let the witnesses be called in to convict this fellow of the affront he offered this lady in a garden." Serenus, hearing the garden mentioned, recalled this woman to mind, and answered, "I remember that, some time ago, a lady came into my garden at an unseasonble hour, with a design, as she said, to take a walk: and I own I took the liberty to tell her it was against decency for one of her sex and quality to be abroad at such an hour." This plea of Serenus having put the officer to the blush for his wife's action, which was too plain an indication of her wicked purpose and design, he dropped his prosecution against the innocent gardener, and withdrew out of court.

But the governor, understanding by this answer that Serenus was a man of virtue, suspected by it that he might be a Christian, such being the most likely, he thought to resent visits from ladies at improper hours. Wherefore, instead of discharging him, he began to question him on this

head, saying, "Who are you, and what is your religion?" Serenus, without hesitating one moment, answered, "I am a Christian." The governor said, "Where have you concealed yourself? and how have you avoided sacrificing to the gods?" "It has pleased God," replied Serenus, "to reserve me for this present time. It seemed awhile ago as if he rejected me as a stone unfit to enter his building, but he has the goodness to take me now to be placed in it; I am ready to suffer all things for his name, that I may have a part in his kingdom with his saints." The governor, hearing this generous answer, burst into rage, and said, "Since you sought to elude by flight the emperor's edicts, and have positively refused to sacrifice to the gods, I condemn you for these crimes to lose your head." The sentence was no sooner pronounced, but the saint was carried off and led to the place of execution, where he was beheaded, on the 23d of February, in 307. The ancient Martyrology attributed to St. Jerom, published at Lucca by Florentinius, joins with him sixty-two others, who, at different times, were crowned at Sirmium. The Roman Martyrology, with others, says seventy-two.

The garden affords a beautiful emblem of a Christian's continual progress in the path of virtue. Plants always mount upwards, and never stop in their growth till they have attained to that maturity which the author of nature has prescribed: all the nourishment they receive ought to tend to this end; if any part wastes itself in superfluities, this is a kind of disease. So in a Christian, every thing ought to carry him toward that perfection which the sanctity of his state requires; and every desire of his soul, every action of his life, to be a step advancing to this in a direct line. When all his inclinations have one uniform bent, and all his labours the same ten-

dency, his progress must be great, because uninterrupted, however imperceptible it may often appear. Even his temporal affairs must be undertaken with this intention, and so conducted as to fall within the compass of this his great design. The saints so regulated all their ordinary actions, their meals, their studies, their conversation and visits, their business and toil, whether tilling a garden or superintending an estate, as to make the love of God their motive, and the accomplishment of his will their only ambition in every action. All travail which leadeth not towards this end is but so much of life mispent and lost, whatever names men may give to their political or military achievements, study of nature, knowledge of distant shores, or cunning in the mysteries of trade, or arts of conversation. Though such actions, when of duty, fall under the order of our salvation, and must be so moderated, directed, and animated with a spirit of religion, as to be made means of our sanctification. But in a Christian life the exercises of devotion, holy desires, and tender affections, which proceed from a spirit of humble compunction, and an ardent love of our Saviour, and by which a soul raises herself up to, and continually sighs after him, are what every one ought most assiduously and most earnestly to study to cultivate. By these is the soul daily more and more purified, and all her powers united to God, and made heavenly. These are properly the most sweet and beautiful flowers of paradise, or of a virtuous life.

ST. MILBURGE, V.

See Malmesb. l. 2. de Regibus, &c. Thorn's Chron. Harpsfield, &c.

SEVENTH CENTURY.

St. Milburge was sister to St. Mildred, and daughter of Merowald, son of Penda, king of Mercia. Having dedicated herself to God in a

religious state, she was chosen abbess of Wenlock, in Shropshire, which house she rendered a true paradise of all virtue. The more she humbled herself, the more she was exalted by God; and whilst she preferred sackcloth to purple and diadems, she became the invisible glory of heaven. The love of purity of heart and holy peace were the subject of her dying exhortation to her dear sisters. She closed her mortal pilgrimage about the end of the seventh century. Malmesbury and Harpsfield write, that many miracles accompanied the translation of her relics, in 1101, on the 26th of May; which Capgrave and Mabillon mistake for the day of her death: but Harpsfield, who had seen the best ancient English manuscripts, assures us that she died on the 23d of February, which is confirmed by all the manuscript additions to the Martyrologies of Bede and others, in which her name occurs, which are followed by the Roman on this day. The abbey of Wenlock was destroyed by the Danes: but a monastery of Cluni monks was afterward erected upon the same spot, by whom her remains were discovered in a vault in 1101, as Malmesbury, who wrote not long after, relates.

B. DOSITHEUS, MONK.

From his life, by a fellow-disciple, in Bollandus, p. 38. and from S. Dorotheus, Docum. 1.

Dositheus, a young man who had spent his first years in a worldly manner, and in gross ignorance of the first principles of Christianity, came to Jerusalem on the motive of curiosity, to see a place he had heard frequent mention made of in common discourse. Here he became so strongly affected by the sight of a picture representing hell, and by the exposition given him of it by an unknown person, that on the spot, he forsook the world, and entered into a monastery,

where the abbot Seridon gave him the monastic habit, and recommended him to the care of one of his monks, named Dorotheus. This experienced director, sensible of the difficulty of passing from one extreme to another, left his pupil at first pretty much to his own liberty in point of eating, but was particularly careful to instil into him the necessity of a perfect renunciation of his own will in every thing, both great and little. As he found his strength would permit, he daily diminished his allowance, till the quantity of six pounds of bread became reduced to eight ounces. St. Dorotheus proceeded with his pupil after much the same manner in other monastic duties; and thus, by a constant and unreserved denial of his own will, and a perfect submission to his director, he surpassed in virtue the greatest fasters of the monastery. All his actions seemed to have nothing of choice, nothing of his own humour in any circumstance of them, the will of God alone reigned in his heart. At the end of five years he was intrusted with the care of the sick, an office he discharged with such an incomparable vigilance, charity, and sweetness, as procured him a high and universal esteem: the sick in particular were comforted and relieved by the very sight of him. He fell into a spitting of blood and a consumption, but continued to the last denying his own will, and was extremely vigilant to prevent any of its suggestions taking place in his heart; being quite the reverse of those persons afflicted with sickness, who, on that account, think every thing allowed them. Unable to do any thing but pray, he asked continually, and followed, in all his devotions, the directions of his master; and when he could not perform his long exercises of prayer, he declared this with his ordinary simplicity to St. Dorotheus, who said to him, "Be not uneasy, only have Jesus Christ always present in your heart." He begged of a

holy old man, renowned in that monastery for sanctity, to pray that God would soon take him to himself. The other answered, "Have a little patience, God's mercy is near." Soon after he said to him, "Depart in peace, and appear in joy before the blessed Trinity, and pray for us." The same servant of God declared after his death, that he had surpassed the rest in virtue, without the practice of any extraordinary austerity. Though he is honoured with the epithet of saint, his name is not placed either in the Roman or Greek calendars.

B. PETER DAMIAN, OR OF DAMIAN.

CARDINAL, BISHOP OF OSTIA.

From his life by his disciple, John of Lodi, in Mabill. Fleury.

A. D. 1072.

PETER, surnamed of Damian, was born about the year 988, in Ravenna, of a good family, but reduced. He was the youngest of many children, and, losing his father and mother very young, was left in the hands of a brother who was married, in whose house he was treated more like a slave, or rather like a beast, than one so nearly related; and when grown up, he was sent to keep swine. He one day became master of a piece of money, which, instead of laying it out in something for his own use, he chose to bestow in alms on a priest, desiring him to offer up his prayers for his father's soul. He had another brother called Damian, who was arch-priest of Ravenna, and afterward a monk; who, taking pity of him, had the charity to give him an education. Having found a father in this brother, he seems from him to have taken the surname of Damian, though he often styles himself the Sinner, out of humility. Those who call him De Honestis, confound him with Peter of Ravenna, who was of the fam-

ily of Honesti. Damian sent Peter to school, first at Faenza, afterward at Parma, where he had Ivo for his master. By the means of good natural parts and close application, it was not long before he found himself in a capacity to teach others, which he did with great applause, and no less advantage by the profits which accrued to him from his professorship. To arm himself against the allurements of pleasure and the artifices of the devil, he began to wear a rough hair shirt under his clothes, and to inure himself to fasting, watching, and prayer. In the night, if any temptation of concupiscence arose, he got out of bed and plunged himself into the cold river. After this he visited churches, reciting the psalter whilst he performed this devotion, till the church office began. He not only gave much away in alms, but was seldom without some poor person at his table, and took a pleasure in serving such, or rather Jesus Christ in their persons, with his own hands. But thinking all this to be removing himself from the deadly poison of sin but by halves, he resolved entirely to leave the world and embrace a monastic life, and at a distance from his own country, for the sake of meeting with the fewer obstacles to his design. While his mind was full of these thoughts, two religious of the order of St. Benedict, belonging to Font-Avellano, a desert at the foot of the Apennine in Umbria, happened to call at the place of his abode; and being much edified at their disinterestedness he took a resolution to embrace their institute, as he did soon after. This hermitage had been founded by blessed Ludolf, about twenty years before St. Peter came thither, and was then in the greatest repute. The hermits here remained two and two together in separate cells, occupied chiefly in prayer and reading. They lived on bread and water four days in the week: on Tuesdays and Thursdays

they eat pulse and herbs, which every one dressed in his own cell: on their fast days all their bread was given them by weight. They never used any wine (the common drink of the country) except for mass, or in sickness: they went barefoot, used disciplines, made many genuflections, struck their breasts, stood with their arms stretched out in prayer, each according to his strength and devotion. After the night office they said the whole psalter before day. Peter watched long before the signal for matins, and after with the rest. These excessive watchings brought on him an insomnie, or wakefulness, which was cured with very great difficulty. But he learned from this to use more discretion. He gave a considerable time to sacred studies, and became as well versed in the scriptures, and other sacred learning, as he was before in profane literature.

His superior ordered him to make frequent exhortations to the religious, and as he had acquired a very great character for virtue and learning, Guy, abbot of Pomposia, begged his superior to send him to instruct his monastery, which consisted of a hundred monks. Peter staid there two years, preaching with great fruit, and was then called back by his abbot, and sent to perform the same function in the numerous abbey of St. Vincent, near the mountain called Pietra Pertusa, or the Hollow Rock. His love for poverty made him abhor and be ashamed to put on a new habit, or any clothes which were not threadbare, and most mean. His obedience was so perfect, that the least word of any superior, or signal given, according to the rule of the house, for the performance of any duty, made him run that moment to discharge, with the utmost exactness, whatever was enjoined. Being recalled home some time after, and commanded by his abbot, with the unanimous consent of the hermitage, to take upon him the government of

the desert after his death, Peter's extreme reluctance only obliged his superior to make greater use of his authority till he acquiesced. Wherefore, at his decease, in 1041, Peter took upon him the direction of that holy family, which he governed with the greatest reputation for wisdom and sanctity. He also founded five other numerous hermitages; in which he placed priors under his inspection. His principal care was to cherish in his disciples the spirit of solitude, charity, and humility. Among them many became great lights of the church, as St. Ralph, bishop of Gubio, whose festival is kept on the 26th of June; St. Dominick, surnamed Loricatus, the 14th of October; St. John of Lodi, his successor in the priory of the Holy Cross, who was also bishop of Gubio, and wrote St. Peter's life; and many others. He was for twelve years much employed in the service of the church by many zealous bishops, and by four popes successively, namely, Gregory VI., Clement II., Leo IX., and Victor II. Their successor, Stephen IX., in 1057, prevailed with him to quit his desert, and made him cardinal bishop of Ostia. But such was his reluctance to the dignity, that nothing less than the pope's threatening him with excommunication, and his commands, in virtue of obedience, could induce Peter to submit.

Stephen IX. dying in 1058, Nicholas II. was chosen pope, a man of deep penetration, of great virtue and learning, and very liberal in alms, as our saint testifies, who assisted him in obliging John, bishop of Veletri, an antipope, set up by the capitaneos or magistrates of Rome, to quit his usurped dignity. Upon complaints of simony in the church of Milan, Nicholas II. sent Peter thither as his legate, who chastised the guilty. Nicholas II. dying, after having sat two years and six months, Alexander was chosen pope, in 1062. Peter strenuously supported him against

the emperor, who set up an antipope, Cadolaus, bishop of Parma, on whom the saint prevailed soon after to renounce his pretensions in a council held at Rome; and engaged Henry IV. king of Germany, who was afterward emperor, to acquiesce in what had been done, though that prince, who in his infancy had succeeded his pious father Henry III. had sucked in very early the corrupt maxims of tyranny and irreligion. But virtue is amiable in the eyes of its very enemies, and often disarms them of their fury. St. Peter had, with great importunity, solicited Nicholas II. for leave to resign his bishopric, and return to his solitude; but could not obtain it. His successor, Alexander II. out of affection for the holy man, was prevailed upon to allow it, in 1062, but not without great difficulty, and the reserve of a power to employ him in church-matters of importance, as he might have occasion hereafter for his assistance. The saint from that time thought himself discharged, not only from the burden of his flock, but also from the quality of superior, with regard to the several monasteries the general inspection of which he had formerly charged himself with, reducing himself to the condition of a simple monk.

In this retirement he edified the church by his penance and compunction, and laboured by his writings to enforce the observance of discipline and morality. His style is copious and vehement, and the strictness of his maxims appears in all his works, especially where he treats of the duties of clergymen and monks. He severely rebuked the bishop of Florence for playing a game at chess.[1] That prelate acknowledged his amusement to be a faulty sloth in a man of his character, and received the saint's remonstrance with great mildness, and submitted to his injunc-

1 Opusc. 20. c. 7.

tion by way of penance, namely, to recite three times the psalter, to wash the feet of twelve poor men, and to give to each a piece of money. He shows those to be guilty of manifold simony, who serve princes or flatter them for the sake of obtaining ecclesiastical preferments.[1] He wrote a treatise to the bishop of Besanzon,[2] against the custom which the canons of that church had of saying the divine office sitting; though he allowed all to sit during the lessons. This saint recommended the use of disciplines whereby to subdue and punish the flesh, which was adopted as a compensation for long penitential fasts. Three thousand lashes, with the recital of thirty psalms, were a redemption of a canonial penance of one year's continuance. Sir Thomas More, St. Francis of Sales, and others, testify that such means of mortification are great helps to tame the flesh, and inure it to the labours of penance; also to remove a hardness of heart and spiritual dryness, and to soften the soul into compunction. But all danger of abuses, excess, and singularity, is to be shunned, and other ordinary bodily mortifications, as watching and fasting, are frequently more advisable. This saint wrote most severely on the obligations of religious men,[3] particularly against their strolling abroad; for one of the most essential qualities of their state is solitude, or at least the spirit of retirement. He complained loudly of certain evasions, by which many palliated real infractions of their vow of poverty. He justly observed, "We can never restore what is decayed of primitive discipline; and if we, by negligence, suffer any diminution in what remains established, future ages will never be able to repair such breaches. Let us not draw upon ourselves so base a reproach; but let us faithfully

1 Opusc. 20. c. 22.
2 Ib. 39. Nat. Alex. Theol. Dogm. 1. 2. c. 8. reg. 8.
3 Opusc. 12.

transmit to posterity the examples of virtue which we have received from our forefathers."[1] The holy man was obliged to interrupt his solitude in obedience to the pope, who sent him in quality of his legate into France, in 1063, commanding the archbishops and others to receive him as himself. The holy man reconciled discords, settled the bounds of the jurisdiction of certain diocesses, and condemned and deposed in councils those who were convicted of simony. He notwithstanding tempered his severity with mildness and indulgence towards penitents, where charity and prudence required such a condescension. Henry IV. king of Germany, at eighteen years of age, began to show the symptoms of a heart abandoned to impiety, infamous debauchery, treachery, and cruelty. He married, in 1066, Bertha, daughter to Otho, marquess of Italy, but afterward, in 1069, sought a divorce, by taking his oath that he had never been able to consummate his marriage. The archbishop of Mentz had the weakness to be gained over by his artifices to favour his desires, in which view he assembled a council at Mentz. Pope Alexander II. forbade him ever to consent to so enormous an injustice, and pitched upon Peter Damian for his legate to preside in that synod, being sensible that a person of the most inflexible virtue, prudence, and constancy, was necessary for so important and difficult an affair, in which passion, power, and craft, made use of every engine in opposition to the cause of God. The venerable legate met the king and bishops at Frankfort, laid before them the orders and instructions of his

1 The works of St. Peter Damian, printed in three volumes, at Lyons, in 1623, consists of one hundred and fifty-eight letters, fifteen sermons, five lives of saints, namely, of St. Odilo, abbot of Cluni; St. Maurus, bishop of Cesene; St. Romuald; St. Ralph, bishop of Gubio; and St. Dominick Loricatus, and SS. Lucillia and Flora. The third volume contains sixty small tracts, with several prayers and hymns.

holiness, and in his name conjured the king to pay a due regard to the law of God, the canons of the church, and his own reputation, and seriously reflect on the public scandal of so pernicious an example. The noblemen likewise all rose up and entreated his majesty never to stain his honour by so foul an action. The king, unable to resist so cogent an authority, dropped his project of a divorce; but remaining the same man in his heart, continued to hate the queen more than ever.

Saint Peter hastened back to his desert of Font-Avellano. Whatever austerities he prescribed to others he was the first to practise himself, remitting nothing of them even in his old age. He lived shut up in his cell as in a prison, fasted every day, except festivals, and allowed himself no other subsistence than coarse bread, bran, herbs, and water, and this he never drank fresh, but what he had kept from the day before. He tortured his body with iron girdles and frequent disciplines, to render it more obedient to the spirit. He passed the three first days of every Lent and Advent without taking any kind of nourishment whatsoever; and often for forty days together lived only on raw herbs and fruits, or on pulse steeped in cold water, without touching so much as bread, or any thing that had passed the fire. A mat spread on the floor was his bed. He used to make wooden spoons and such like useful mean things, to exercise himself at certain hours in manual labour. Henry, archbishop of Ravenna, having been excommunicated for grievous enormities, St. Peter was sent by pope Alexander II. in quality of legate, to adjust the affairs of the church. When he arrived at Ravenna, in 1072, he found the unfortunate prelate just dead; but brought the accomplices of his crimes to a sense of their guilt, and imposed on them a suitable penance. This was his last undertaking for the

church, God being pleased soon after to call him to eternal rest, and to the crown of his labours. Old age and the fatigues of his journey did not make him lay aside his accustomed mortifications, by which he consummated his holocaust. In his return towards Rome, he was stopped by a fever in the monastery of our Lady without the gates of Faenza, and died there on the eighth day of his sickness, whilst the monks were reciting matins round about him. He passed from that employment which had been the delight of his heart on earth, to sing the same praises of God in eternal glory, on the 22nd of February, 1072, being fourscore and three years old. He is honoured as patron at Faenza and Font-Avellano, on the 23rd of the same month.

ST. BOISIL, PRIOR OF MAILROSS, OR MELROSS, C.

The famous abbey of Mailross, which in later ages embraced the Cistercian rule, originally followed that of St. Columba. It was situated upon the river Tweed, in a great forest, and in the seventh century was comprised in the kingdom of the English Saxons in Northumberland, which was extended in the eastern part of Scotland as high as the Frith. Saint Boisil was prior of this house under the holy abbot Eata, who seem to have been both English youths, trained up in monastic discipline by St. Aidan. Boisil was, says Bede, a man of sublime virtues, and endued with a prophetic spirit. His eminent sanctity determined St. Cuthbert to repair rather to Mailross than to Lindisfarne in his youth, and he received from this saint the knowledge of the holy scriptures, and the example of all virtues. St. Boisil had often in his mouth the holy names of the adorable Trinity, and of our divine Redeemer Jesus, which he repeated with a wonderful senti-

ment of devotion, and often with such an abundance of tears as excited others to weep with him. He would say frequently, with the most tender affection, "How good a Jesus have we!" At the first sight of St. Cuthbert, he said to the bystanders, "Behold a servant of God." Bede produces the testimony of St. Cuthbert, who declared that Boisil foretold him the chief things that afterward happened to him in the sequel of his life. Three years beforehand, he foretold the great pestilence of 664, and that he himself should die of it, but Eata, the abbot, should outlive it. Boisil, not content continually to instruct and exhort his religious brethren by word and example, made frequent excursions into the villages to preach to the poor, and to bring straying souls into the paths of truth and of life. St. Cuthbert was taken with the pestilential disease: when St. Boisil saw him recovered, he said to him, "Thou seest brother, that God hath delivered thee from this disease, nor shalt thou any more feel it, nor die at this time: but my death being at hand, neglect not to learn something of me so long as I shall be able to teach thee, which will be no more than seven days." "And what," said Cuthbert, "will be best for me to read, which may be finished in seven days?" "The gospel of St. John," said he, "which we may in that time read over, and confer upon as much as shall be necessary." For they only sought therein, says Bede, the sincerity of faith working through love, and not the treating of profound questions. Having accomplished this reading in seven days, the man of God, Boisil, falling ill of the aforesaid disease, came to his last day, which he passed over in extraordinary jubilation of soul, out of his earnest desire of being with Christ. In his last moments he often repeated those words of St. Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Thus he entered into the happiness of eternal

light, in the year 664. The instructions which he was accustomed most earnestly to inculcate to his religious brethren were, "That they would never cease giving thanks to God for the gift of their religious vocation; that they would always watch over themselves against self-love and all attachment to their own will and private judgment, as against their capital enemy; that they would converse assiduously with God by interior prayer, and labour continually to attain to the most perfect purity of heart, this being the true and short road to the perfection of Christian virtue. Out of the most ardent and tender love which he bore our divine Redeemer, and in order daily to enkindle and improve the same, he was wonderfully delighted with reading every day a part of the gospel of St. John, which for this purpose he divided into seven parts or tasks. St. Cuthbert inherited from him this devotion, and in his tomb was found a Latin copy of St. John's gospel, which was in the possession of the present earl of Litchfield, and which his lordship gave to Mr. Thomas Philips, canon of Tongres.

Bede relates, (Hist. l. 5. c. 10.) as an instance that St. Boisil continued after his death to interest himself particularly in obtaining for his country and friends the divine mercy and grace, that he appeared twice to one of his disciples, giving him a charge to assure St. Egbert, who had been hindered from going to preach the gospel to the infidels in Germany, that God commanded him to repair to the monasteries of St. Columba, to instruct them in the right manner of celebrating Easter. These monasteries were, that in the island of Colm-Kill, or Iona (which was the ordinary burial-place of the kings of Scotland down to Malcolm III.) and that of Magis, in the isles of Orkney, built by bishop Colman. The remains of St. Boisil were translated to Durham, and deposited near those of his disciple St. Cuthbert, in 1030. Wilson and other English authors mention St. Boisil on the 7th of August; but in the Scotish calendars his name occurs on the 23rd of February. See Bede, Hist. l. 4. c. 27. l. 5 c. 10. and in Vitâ S. Cuthberti, c. 8.

FEBRUARY XXIV

SAINT MATTHIAS, APOSTLE.

From Acts i. 21. See Tillemont, Henschenius.

St. Clement of Alexandria[1] assures us, from tradition, that this saint was one of the seventy-two disciples, which is confirmed by Eusebius[2] and St. Jerom;[3] and we learn from the Acts[4] of the apostles, that he was a constant attendant on our Lord, from the time of his baptism by St. John to his ascension. St. Peter having, in a general assembly of the faithful held soon after, declared from holy scripture, the necessity of choosing a twelfth apostle, in the room of Judas; two were unanimously pitched upon by the assembly, as most worthy of the dignity, Joseph, called Barsabas, and, on account of his extraordinary piety, surnamed the Just, and Matthias. After devout prayer to God, that he would direct them in their choice, they proceeded in it by way of lot, which falling by the divine direction on Matthias, he was accordingly associated with the eleven, and ranked among the apostles. When in deliberations each side appears equally good, or each candidate of equally approved merit, lots may be sometimes lawfully used; otherwise, to commit a thing of importance to such a chance, or to expect a miraculous direction of divine providence in it, would be a criminal superstition and a tempting of God, except he himself, by an evident revelation or inspiration, should appoint such a means for the manifestation of his will, promising his supernatural interposition in it, which was the case on this extraordinary occasion. The miraculous dreams or lots, which we read of in the prophets, must no ways authorize any rash

1 Strom. l. 4. p. 488. 2 L. 1. c. 12.
3 In Catal. 4 C. i. 21.

superstitious use of such means in others who have not the like authority.

We justly admire the virtue of this holy assembly of saints. Here were no solicitations or intrigues. No one presented himself to the dignity. Ambition can find no place in a virtuous or humble heart. He who seeks a dignity either knows himself unqualified, and is on this account guilty of the most flagrant injustice with regard to the public, by desiring a charge to which he is no ways equal: or he thinks himself qualified for it, and this self-conceit and confidence in his own abilities renders him the most unworthy of all others. Such a disposition deprives a soul of the divine assistance, without which we can do nothing; for God withdraws his grace, and refuses his blessing where self-sufficiency and pride have found any footing. It is something of a secret confidence in ourselves, and a presumption that we deserve the divine succour, which banishes him from us. This is true even in temporal undertakings; but much more so in the charge of souls, in which all success is more particularly the special work of the Holy Ghost, not the fruit of human industry. These two holy candidates were most worthy of the apostleship, because perfectly humble, and because they looked upon that dignity with trembling, though they considered its labours, dangers, and persecutions with holy joy, and with a burning zeal, for the glory of God. No regard was had to worldly talents, none to flesh and blood. God was consulted by prayer, because no one is to be assumed to his ministry who is not called by him, and who does not enter it by the door,[1] and with the undoubted marks of his vocation. Judas's misfortune filled Saint Matthias with the greater humility and fervour, lest he also should fall. We Gentiles are called upon the disinherison of the Jews, and are

[1] Jo. x. 1

ingrafted on their stock.[1] We ought therefore to learn to stand always in watchfulness and fear, or we shall be also cut off ourselves, to give place to others whom God will call in our room, and even compel to enter, rather than spare us. The number of his elect depends not on us. His infinite mercy has invited us without any merit on our side; but if we are ungrateful, he can complete his heavenly city without us, and will certainly make our reprobation the most dreadful example of his justice to all eternity. The greater the excess of his goodness and clemency has been towards us, the more dreadful will be the effects of his vengeance. *Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God; but the sons of the kingdom shall he cast forth.*[2]

St. Matthias received the Holy Ghost with the rest soon after his election; and after the dispersion of the disciples, applied himself with zeal to the functions of his apostleship, in converting nations to the faith. He is recorded by St. Clement of Alexandria,[3] to have been remarkable for inculcating the necessity of the mortification of the flesh with regard to all its sensual and irregular desires, an important lesson he had received from Christ, and which he practised assiduously on his own flesh. The tradition of the Greeks in their menologies tells us that St. Matthias planted the faith about Cappadocia and on the coasts of the Caspian sea, residing chiefly near the port Issus. He must have undergone great hardships and labours amidst so savage a people. The same authors add that he received the crown of martyrdom in Colchis, which they call Æthiopia. The Latins keep his festival on the 24th of February. Some portions of his relics are shown in the abbatical church of Triers, and in that of St. Mary Major in Rome, unless these latter belong

1 Rom. xi. 12. 2 Matt. viii. 11. 3 Strom. l. 3. p. 436.

to another Matthias, who was one of the first bishops of Jerusalem: on which see the Bollanists.

As the call of St. Matthias, so is ours purely the work of God, and his most gratuitous favour and mercy. What thanks, what fidelity and love do we not owe him for this inestimable grace! When he decreed to call us to his holy faith, cleanse us from sin, and make us members of his spiritual kingdom, and heirs of his glory, he saw nothing in us which could determine him to such a predilection. We were infected with sin, and could have no title to the least favour, when God said to us, *I have loved Jacob:* when he distinguished us from so many millions who perish in the blindness of infidelity and sin, drew us out of the mass of perdition, and bestowed on us the grace of his adoption, and all the high privileges that are annexed to this dignity. In what transports of love and gratitude ought we not without intermission, to adore his infinite goodness to us, and beg that we may be always strengthened by his grace to advance continually in humility and his holy love, lest, by slackening our pace in his service, we fall from this state of happiness, forfeit this sublime grace, and perish with Judas. Happy would the church be, if all converts were careful to maintain themselves in the same fervour in which they returned to God. But by a neglect to watch over themselves, and to shun dangers, and by falling into sloth, they often relapse into a condition much worse than the former.

SS. MONTANUS, LUCIUS, FLAVIAN,

JULIAN, VICTORICUS, PRIMOLUS, RHENUS, AND DONATIAN, MARTYRS AT CARTHAGE.

From their original acts written, the first part by the martyrs themselves, the rest by an eye-witness. They are published by Ruinart.

A. D. 259.

THE persecution, raised by Valerian, had raged

two years, during which many had received the crown of martyrdom, and, amongst others, St. Cyprian, in September, 258. The proconsul Galerius Maximus, who had pronounced sentence on that saint, dying himself soon after, the procurator, Solon, continued the persecution, waiting for the arrival of a new proconsul from Rome. After some days, a sedition was raised in Carthage against him, in which many were killed. The tyrannical man, instead of making search after the guilty, vented his fury upon the Christians, knowing this would be agreeable to the idolaters. Accordingly he caused these eight Christians, all disciples of St. Cyprian, and most of them of the clergy, to be apprehended. As soon as we were taken, say the authors of the acts, we were given in custody to the officers of the quarter:[1] when the governor's soldiers told us that we should be condemned to the flames, we prayed to God with great fervour to be delivered from that punishment: and he, in whose hands are the hearts of men, was pleased to grant our request. The governor altered his first intent, and ordered us into a very dark and incommodious prison, where we found the priest, Victor, and some others: but we were not dismayed at the filth and darkness of the place, our faith and joy in the Holy Ghost reconciled us to our sufferings in that place, though these were such as it is not easy for words to describe; but the greater our trials, the greater is he who overcomes them in us. Our brother Rhenus, in the mean time had a vision, in which he saw several of the prisoners going out of prison with a lighted lamp preceding each of them, whilst others, that had no such lamp, stayed behind. He discerned us in this vision, and assured us that we were of the number of those who went forth with lamps. This gave us great joy; for we understood that the lamp represented Christ, the

[1] Apud regionantes.

true light, and that we were to follow him by martyrdom.

The next day we were sent for by the governor, to be examined. It was a triumph to us to be conducted as a spectacle through the market-place and the streets, with our chains rattling. The soldiers who knew not where the governor would hear us, dragged us from place to place, till at length, he ordered us to be brought into his closet. He put several questions to us; our answers were modest, but firm: at length we were remanded to prison; here we prepared ourselves for new conflicts. The sharpest trial was that which we underwent by hunger and thirst, the governor having commanded that we should be kept without meat and drink for several days, insomuch that water was refused us after our work: yet Flavian, the deacon, added great voluntary austerities to these hardships, often bestowing on others that little refreshment which was most sparingly allowed us at the public charge.

God was pleased himself to comfort us in this our extreme misery, by a vision which he vouchsafed to the priest Victor, who suffered martyrdom a few days after. "I saw last night," said he to us, "an infant, whose countenance was of a wonderful brightness, enter the prison. He took us to all parts to make us go out, but there was no outlet; then he said to me, 'You have still some concern at your being retained here, but be not discouraged, I am with you: carry these tidings to your companions, and let them know that they shall have a more glorious crown.' I asked him where heaven was; the infant replied, 'Out of the world.'" Show it me, says Victor. The infant answered, "Where then would be your faith?" Victor said, "I cannot retain what you command me: tell me a sign that I may give them." He answered, "Give them the sign of Jacob, that is, his mystical ladder, reaching to the

heavens." Soon after this vision, Victor was put to death. This vision filled us with joy.

God gave us, the night following, another assurance of his mercy by a vision to our sister Quartillosia, a fellow-prisoner, whose husband and son had suffered death for Christ three days before, and who followed them by martyrdom a few days after. "I saw," says she, "my son, who suffered; he was in the prison sitting on a vessel of water, and said to me, 'God has seen your sufferings.' Then entered a young man of a wonderful stature, and he said, 'Be of good courage, God hath remembered you.'" The martyrs had received no nourishment the preceding day, nor had they any on the day that followed this vision; but at length Lucian, then priest, and afterward bishop of Carthage, surmounting all obstacles, got food to be carried to them in abundance by the subdeacon, Herennian, and by Januarius, a catechumen. The acts say they brought the never failing food,[1] which Tillemont understands of the blessed eucharist, and the following words still more clearly determine it in favour of this sense. They go on: We have all one and the same spirit, which unites and cements us together in prayer, in mutual conversation, and in all our actions. These are those amiable bands which put the devil to flight, are most agreeable to God, and obtain of him, by joint prayer, whatever they ask. These are the ties which link hearts together, and which make men the children of God. To be heirs of his kingdom we must be his children, and to be his children we must love one another. It is impossible for us to attain to the inheritance of his heavenly glory, unless we keep that union and peace with all our brethren which our heavenly Father has established amongst us. Nevertheless, this union suffered some prejudice in our troop, but the breach was soon repaired. It hap-

1 Alimentum indeficiens

pened that Montanus had some words with Julian, about a person who was not of our communion, and who was got among us (probably admitted by Julian). Montanus on this account rebuked Julian, and they, for sometime afterward, behaved towards each other with coldness, which was, as it were, a seed of discord. Heaven had pity on them both, and, to reunite them, admonished Montanus by a dream, which he related to us as follows: "It appeared to me that the centurions were come to us, and that they conducted us through a long path into a spacious field, where we were met by Cyprian and Lucius. After this we came into a very luminous place, where our garments became white and our flesh became whiter than our garments, and so wonderfully transparent, that there was nothing in our hearts but what was clearly exposed to view: but in looking into myself, I could discover some filth in my own bosom; and, meeting Lucian, I told him what I had seen, adding, that the fifth I had observed within my breast denoted my coldness towards Julian. Wherefore, brethren, let us love, cherish, and promote, with all our might, peace and concord. Let us be here unanimous, in imitation of what we shall be hereafter. As we hope to share in the rewards promised to the just, and to avoid the punishments wherewith the wicked are threatened; as, in fine, we desire to be and reign with Christ, let us do those things which will lead us to him and his heavenly kingdom." Hitherto the martyrs wrote in prison what happened to them there: the rest was written by those persons who were present, to whom Flavian, one of the martyrs, had recommended it.

After suffering extreme hunger and thirst, with other hardships, during an imprisonment of many months, the confessors were brought before the president, and made a glorious confession. The edict of Valerian condemned only bishops, priests,

and deacons to death. The false friends of Flavian maintained before the judge that he was no deacon, and, consequently was not comprehended within the emperor's decree; upon which, though he declared himself to be one, he was not then condemned; but the rest were adjudged to die. They walked cheerfully to the place of execution, and each of them gave exhortations to the people. Lucius, who was naturally mild and modest, was a little dejected on account of his distemper, and the inconveniences of the prison; he therefore went before the rest, accompanied but by a few persons, lest he should be oppressed by the crowd, and so not have the honour to spill his blood. Some cried out to him, "Remember us." "Do you also," says he, "remember me." Julian and Victoricus exhorted a long while the brethren to peace, and recommended to their care the whole body of the clergy, those especially who had undergone the hardships of imprisonment. Montanus, who was endued with great strength, both of body and mind, cried out, "He that sacrificeth to any God but the true one, shall be utterly destroyed." This he often repeated. He also checked the pride and wicked obstinacy of the heretics, telling them that they might discern the true church by the multitude of its martyrs. Like a true disciple of Saint Cyprian, and a zealous lover of discipline, he exhorted those that had fallen not to be over hasty, but fully to accomplish their penance. He exhorted the virgins to preserve their purity, and to honour the bishops, and all the bishops to abide in concord. When the executioner was ready to give the stroke, he prayed aloud to God that Flavian, who had been reprieved at the people's request, might follow them on the third day. And, to express his assurance that his prayer was heard, he rent in pieces the handkerchief with which his eyes were to be covered, and ordered one half of it to be re-

served for Flavian, and desired that a place might be kept for him where he was to be interred, that they might not be separated even in the grave. Flavian, seeing his crown delayed, made it the object of his ardent desires and prayers. And as his mother stuck close by his side with the constancy of the mother of the holy Maccabees, and with longing desires to see him glorify God by his sacrifice, he said to her, "You know, mother, how much I have longed to enjoy the happiness of dying by martyrdom." In one of the two nights which he survived, he was favoured with a vision, in which one said to him, "Why do you grieve? You have been twice a confessor, and you shall suffer martyrdom by the sword." On the third day he was ordered to be brought before the governor. Here it appeared how much he was beloved by the people, who endeavoured by all means to save his life. They cried out to the judge that he was no deacon; but he affirmed that he was. A centurion presented a billet which set forth that he was not. The judge accused him of lying to procure his own death. He answered, "Is that probable? and not rather that they are guilty of an untruth who say the contrary?" The people demanded that he might be tortured in hopes he would recall his confession on the rack; but the judge condemned him to be beheaded. The sentence filled him with joy, and he was conducted to the place of execution, accompanied by a great multitude, and by many priests. A shower dispersed the infidels, and the martyr was led into a house where he had an opportunity of taking his last leave of the faithful without one profane person being present. He told them that in a vision he had asked Cyprian whether the stroke of death is painful, and that the martyr answered, "The body feels no pain when the soul gives herself entirely to God." At the place of execution he prayed for

the peace of the church and the union of the brethren; and seemed to foretell Lucian that he should be bishop of Carthage, as he was soon after. Having done speaking, he bound his eyes with that half of the handkerchief which Montanus had ordered to be kept for him, and, kneeling in prayer, received the last stroke. These saints are joined together on this day in the present Roman and in ancient Martyrologies.

ST. LETHARD, BISHOP OF SENLIS, C.

CALLED BY VENERABLE BEDE, LUIDHARD.

BEDE, William of Malmesbury, and other historians relate, that when Bertha, daughter of Charibert, king of the French, was married to Ethelbert, king of Kent, about the year 566, this holy French prelate accompanied her into England, and resided at Canterbury in quality of almoner and chaplain to the queen.

Though his name does not occur in the imperfect catalogue of the bishops of Senlis, which is found in the ancient copy of St. Gregory's sacramentary, which belonged to that church in 880, nor in the old edition of Gallia Christiana, yet, upon the authority of the English historians, is inserted in the new edition the thirteenth, from St. Regulus, the founder of that see, one of the Roman missionaries in Gaul about the time of St. Dionysius. The relics of St. Regulus are venerated in the ancient collegiate church which bears his name in Senlis, and his principal festival is kept on the 23d of April. St. Lethard having resigned this see to St. Sanctinus, was only recorded in England. On the high altar of St. Augustine's monastery at Canterbury, originally called SS. Peter and Paul's, his relics were exposed in a shrine near those of the holy king Ethelbert, as appears from the Monasticon. St. Lethard died at Canterbury about the year 596. Several miracles are recorded to have been obtained by his intercession, particularly a ready supply of rain in time of drought. See Bede, l. 1. c. 25. Will. of Malmesbury.

B. ROBERT OF ARBRISSEL,

SO CALLED FROM THE PLACE OF HIS BIRTH.

HE was archpriest and grand vicar of the diocess of Rennes, and chancellor to the duke of Brittany; but divested himself of these employ-

ments, and led a most austere eremitical life, in the forest of Craon, in Anjou. He soon filled that desert with anchorets, and built in it a monastery of regular canons. This is the abbey called De la Roe, in Latin De Rotâ, which was founded, according to Duchesne, in 1093, and confirmed by pope Urban II., in 1096. This pope having heard him preach at Angers, gave him the powers of an apostolical missionary. The blessed man therefore preached in many places, and formed many disciples. In 1099 he founded the great monastery of Fontevraud, Fons Ebraldi, a league from the Loire, in Poitou. He appointed superioress Herlande of Champagne, a near kinswoman to the duke of Brittany; and Petronilla of Craon, baroness of Chemillé, coadjutress. He settled it under the rule of St. Benedict, with perpetual abstinence from flesh, even in all sicknesses, and put his order under the special patronage of the blessed Virgin. By a singular institution, he appointed the abbess superioress over the men, who live in a remote monastery, whose superiors she nominates. The holy founder prescribed so strict silence in his order, as to forbid any one to speak, even by signs without necessity. The law of enclosure was not less rigorous, insomuch that no priest was allowed to enter even the infirmary of the nuns, to visit the sick, if it could possibly be avoided, and the sick, even in their agonies, were carried into the church, that they might there receive the sacraments. Among the great conversions of which St. Robert was the instrument, none was more famous than that of queen Bertrade, the daughter of Simon Montfort, and sister of Amauri Montfort, count of Evreux. She was married to Fulk, count of Anjou, in 1089, but quitted him in 1092, to marry Philip I., king of France, who was enamoured of her. Pope Urban II. excommunicated that prince on this account in 1094, and again in 1100, because the king, after

having put her away, had taken her again. These censures were taken off when she and the king had sworn upon the gospels in the council of Poitiers never to live together again. Bertrade, when she had retired to an estate which was her dower, in the diocess of Chartres, was so powerfully moved by the exhortations of St. Robert, that, renouncing the world, of which she had been long the idol, she took the religious veil at Fontevraud, and led there an exemplary life till her death. Many other princesses embraced the same state under the direction of the holy founder: among others Hersande of Champagne, widow of William of Monsoreau: Agnes of Montroëil, of the same family; Ermengarde, wife of Alin Fergan, duke of Brittany; Philippa, countess of Thoulouse, wife of William IX., duke of Aquitain, &c. After the death of St. Robert, several queens and princesses had taken sanctuary in this monastery, flying from the corruption of the world. Among its abbesses are counted fourteen princesses, of which five were of the royal house of Bourbon. The abbot Suger, writing to pope Eugenius III., about fifty years after the death of the founder, says there were at that time in this order between five and six thousand religious persons. The order of Fontevraud, in France, is divided into four provinces. B. Robert lived to see above three thousand nuns in this one house. He died in 1116, on the 25th of February, St. Matthias's day, it being leap-year, in the seventieth of his age, at the monastery of Orsan, near Linieres, in Berry. His body was conveyed to Fontevraud, and there interred. The bishop of Poitiers, in 1644, took a juridical information of many miracles wrought by his intercession.[1]

1 Some have raked up most groundless slanders to asperse the character of this holy man, as, that he admitted all to the religious habit that asked it, and was guilty of too familiar conversation with women. These slanders were spread in a letter of Roscelin, whose errors against faith were condemned in the council of Soissons in 1095.

From the time of his death he has been honoured with the title of blessed, and is invoked in the litany of his order, which keeps his festival only with a mass of the Trinity on St. Matthias's day.

See his life by Baldric, bishop of Dole, his contemporary; Helyot, Hist. des Ordres Relig. t. 6. p. 83. Dom Lobineau, Hist. de Bretagne, fol. 1707. p. 113. and, in the first place, Chatelain, Notes on the Martyrol. p. 736 to 758. who clearly confutes those who place his death in 1117.

Such scandalous reports excited the zeal of some good men, and they are mentioned in a letter ascribed to Marbodius, bishop of Rennes, and in another of Godfrey, abbot of Vendome, addressed to the holy man himself. This last letter seems genuine, though some have denied it. But the charge was only gathered from hearsay, and notoriously false, as the very authors of these letters were soon convinced. It is not surprising that a man who bade open defiance to all sinners, and whose reputation ran so high in the world, should excite the murmurs of some and envy of others, which zeal and merit never escape. But his boldness to declaim against the vices of great men, and the most hardened sinners; the high encomiums and favourable testimonies which all who knew him gave to his extraordinary sanctity, which forced even envy itself to respect him; and his most holy comportment and happy death, furnish most invincible proofs of his innocence and purity; which he preserved only by humility, and the most scrupulous flight of all dangerous occasions. Godfrey of Vendome was afterward perfectly satisfied of the sanctity of this great servant of God and became his warmest friend and patron; as is evident from several of his letters. See l. 1. ep. 24. and 26. l. 3. ep. 2. l. 4. ep. 32. He entered into an association of prayers with the monastery of Fontevraud in 1114; and so much did he esteem his virtue that he made a considerable foundation at Fontevraud, often visited the church, and built himself a house near it, called Hotel de Vendome, that he might more frequently enjoy the converse of St. Robert, and promote his holy endeavours. The letter of Marbodius is denied to be genuine by Mainferme, and Natalis Alexander, and suspected by D. Beaugendre, who published the works of Marbodius at Paris, in 1708. But the continuator of the Hist. Liter. t. 10. p. 359, clearly shows this letter to have been wrote by Marbodius, who, in it, speaks of these rumours without giving credit to them, and with tenderness and charity exhorts Robert to reform his conduct if the reports were true; to dissipate them by justifying himself, if they were false. Marbodius was soon satisfied as to these calumnies, and was the saint's great protector, in 1101, in his missions in Brittany, particularly in his diocess of Rennes; whither he seems to have invited him. Ermengarde, countess of Brittany, was so moved by St. Robert's sermons, that she earnestly desired to renounce the world, and retire to Fontevraud. The saint exhorted her to continue in the world, and to sanctify her soul by her duties in her public station, especially by patience and prayer: yet, some years after, she took the veil at Fontevraud. See F. de la Mainferme, in his three apologetic volumes in vindication of this patriarch of his order, Natalis Alexander, sæc. xii. diss. 6, and especially Sorin's Apologetique du Saint, in 1702, a polite and spirited work.

ST. PRETEXTATUS, OR PRIX, M.

ARCHBISHOP OF ROUEN.

He was chosen archbishop of Rouen in 549, and in 557, assisted at the third council of Paris held to abolish incestuous marriages, and remove other crying abuses: also at the second council of Tours in 566. By his zeal in reproving Fredegonda for her injustices and cruelties, he had incurred her indignation. King Clotaire I. in 562, had left the French monarchy divided among his four sons. Charibert was king of Paris, Gontran of Orleans and Burgundy, Sigebert I. of Austrasia, and Chilperic I. of Soissons. Sigebert married Brunehault, younger daughter of Athanagilde, king of the Visigoths in Spain, and Chilperic her elder sister Galsvinda; but after her death he took to wife Fredegonda, who had been his mistress, and was strongly suspected to have contrived the death of the queen by poison. Hence Brunehault stirred up Sigebert against her and her husband. But Fredegonda contrived the assassination of king Sigebert in 575, and Chilperic secured Brunehault his wife, her three daughters, and her son Childebert. This latter soon made his escape, and fled to Metz, where he was received by his subjects, and crowned king of Austrasia. The city of Paris, after the death of Charibert in 566, by the agreement of the three surviving brothers, remained common to them all, till Chilperic seized it. He sent Meroveus, his son by his first wife, to reduce the country about Poitiers, which belonged to the young prince Childebert. But Meroveus, at Rouen, fell in love with his aunt Brunehault, then a prisoner in that city; and bishop Prix, in order to prevent a grievous scandal, judging circumstances to be sufficiently cogent to require a dispensation, married them: for which he was accused of high treason by king

Chilperic before a council at Paris, in 577, in the church of St. Peter, since called St. Genevieve, St. Gregory of Tours there warmly defended his innocence, and Prix confessed the marriage, but denied that he had been privy to the prince's revolt; but was afterward prevailed upon, through the insidious persuasion of certain emissaries of Chilperic, to plead guilty, and confess that out of affection he had been drawn in to favour the young prince, who was his godson. Whereupon he was condemned by the council, and banished by the king into a small island upon the coast of Lower Neustria, near Coutances. His sufferings he improved to the sanctification of his soul by penance and the exercise of all heroic Christian virtues. The rage and clamour with which his powerful enemies spread their slanders to beat down his reputation, staggered many of his friends: but St. Gregory of Tours never forsook him. Meroveus was assassinated near Terouanne, by an order of his step-mother Fredegonda, who was also suspected to have contrived the death of her husband Chilperic, who was murdered at Chelles, in 584. She had three years before procured Clovis, his younger son by a former wife, to be assassinated, so that the crown of Soissons devolved upon her own son Clotaire II.: but for his and her own protection, she had recourse to Gontran, the religious king of Orleans and Burgundy. By his order Prix, after a banishment of six years, was restored with honour to his see; Ragnemond, the bishop of Paris, who had been a principal flatterer of Chilperic, in the persecution of this prelate, having assured this prince that the council had not deposed him, but only enjoined him penance. St. Prix assisted at the council of Macon in 585, where he harangued several times, and exerted his zeal in framing many wise regulations for the reformation of discipline. He continued his pastoral labours in the

care of his flock, and by just remonstrances often endeavoured to reclaim the wicked queen Fredegonda, who frequently resided at Rouen, and filled the kingdom with scandals, tyrannical oppressions, and murders. This Jezabel grew daily more and more hardened in iniquity, and by her secret order St. Prix was assassinated whilst he assisted at matins in his church in the midst of his clergy on Sunday the 25th of February. Happy should we be if under all afflictions, with this holy penitent, we considered that sin is the original fountain from whence all those waters of bitterness flow, and by labouring effectually to cut off this evil, convert its punishment into its remedy and a source of benedictions. St. Prix of Rouen is honoured in the Roman and Gallican Martyrologies. Those who with Chatelain, &c. place his death on the 14th of April, suppose him to have been murdered on Easter day; but the day of our Lord's Resurrection in this passage of our historian, means no more than Sunday.

See St. Gregory of Tours, Hist. Franc. l. 5. c. 10. 15. Fleury, l. 34. n. 52.

ST. ETHELBERT, C.

FIRST CHRISTIAN KING AMONG THE ENGLISH.

He was king of Kent, the fifth descendant from Hengist, who first settled the English Saxons in Britain, in 448, and the foundation of whose kingdom is dated in 455. Ethelbert married, in his father's life-time, Bertha, the only daughter of Charibert, king of Paris, and cousin-german to Clotaire, king of Soissons, and Childebert, king of Austrasia, whose two sons, Theodobert and Theodoric, or Thierry, reigned after his death, the one in Austrasia, the other in Burgundy. Ethelbert succeeded his father Ermenric, in 560. The kingdom of Kent having enjoyed a continued peace for about a hundred years,

was arrived at a degree of power and riches, which gave it a pre-eminence in the Saxon heptarchy in Britain, and so great a superiority and influence over the rest, that Ethelbert is said by Bede to have ruled as far as the Humber, and Ethelbert is often styled king of the English. His queen Bertha was a very zealous and pious Christian princess, and by the articles of her marriage had free liberty to exercise her religion; for which purpose she was attended by a venerable French prelate, named Luidhard, or Lethard, bishop of Senlis. He officiated constantly in an old church dedicated to St. Martin, lying a little out of the walls of Canterbury. The exemplary life of this prelate, and his frequent discourses on religion, disposed several Pagans about the court to embrace the faith. The merit of the queen in the great work of her husband's conversion is acknowledged by our historians, and she deserved by her piety and great zeal to be compared by St. Gregory the Great to the celebrated St. Helen.[1] Divine providence, by these means, mercifully prepared the heart of a great king to entertain a favourable opinion of our holy religion, when St. Augustine landed in his dominions: to whose life the reader is referred for an account of this monarch's happy conversion to the faith. From that time he appeared quite changed into another man, it being for the remaining twenty years of his life his only ambition and endeavour to establish the perfect reign of Christ, both in his own soul and in the hearts of all his subjects. His ardour in the exercises of penance and devotion never suffered any abatement, this being a property of true virtue, which is not to be acquired without much labour and pains, self-denial and watchfulness, resolution and constancy. Great were, doubtless, the difficulties and dangers which he had to

1 St. Greg. M. l. 9. ep. 60.

encounter in subduing his passions, and in vanquishing many obstacles which the world and devil failed not to raise: but these trials were infinitely subservient to his spiritual advancement, by rousing him continually to greater vigilance and fervour, and by the many victories and the exercise of all heroic virtues of which they furnish the occasions. In the government of his kingdom, his thoughts were altogether turned upon the means of best promoting the welfare of his people. He enacted most wholesome laws, which were held in high esteem in succeeding ages in this island: he abolished the worship of idols throughout his kingdom, and shut up their temples, or turned them into churches. His royal palace at Canterbury he gave for the use of the archbishop St. Austin: he founded in that city the cathedral called Christ Church, and built without the walls the abbey and church of SS. Peter and Paul, afterward called St. Austin's. The foundation of St. Andrew's at Rochester, St. Paul's at London, and many other churches, affords many standing proofs of his munificence to the church, and the servants of God. He was instrumental in bringing over to the faith of Christ, Sebert, king of the East-Saxons, with his people, and Redwald, king of the East-Angles, though the latter afterward relapsing, pretended to join the worship of idols with that of Christ. King Ethelbert, after having reigned fifty-six years, exchanged his temporal diadem for an eternal crown, in 616, and was buried in the church of SS. Peter and Paul.

His remains were afterward deposited under the high altar in the same church, then called St. Austin's. St. Ethelbert is commemorated on this day in the British and Roman Martyrologies: he was vulgarly called by our ancestors St. Albert, under which name he is titular saint of several churches in England; particularly of one in Norwich, which was built before the cathedral, an account of which is given by Blomfield, in his history of Norfolk, and the city of Norwich. Polydore Virgil tells us that a light was kept always burning before the tomb of St. Ethelbert, and was sometimes an instrument of miracles, even to the days of Henry VIII. See Bede, Hist. Ang. l. 1. c. 25, &c. Henschen. t. 3. Febr. p. 471

FEBRUARY XXV.

ST. TARASIUS CONFESSOR,

PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

From his life wrote by Ignatius, his disciple, and from the church-historians of his time. See Bollandus.

A. D. 806.

Tarasius was born about the middle of the eighth century. His parents were both of patrician families. His father, George, was a judge in great esteem for his well-known justice, and his mother, Eucratia, no less celebrated for her piety. She brought him up in the practice of the most eminent virtues. Above all things she recommended to him to keep no company but that of the most virtuous. The young man, by his talents and virtue, gained the esteem of all, and was raised to the greatest honours of the empire, being made consul, and afterward first secretary of state to the emperor Constantine and the empress Irene, his mother. In the midst of the court, and in its highest honours, surrounded by all that could flatter pride, or gratify sensuality, he led a life like that of a religious man.

Leo, the Isaurian, his son Constantine Copronymus, and his grandson Leo, surnamed Chazarus, three successive emperors, had established, with all their power, the heresy of the Iconoclasts, or image-breakers, in the East. The empress Irene, wife to the last, was always privately a Catholic, though an artful, ambitious woman. Her husband dying miserably in 780, after a five years' reign, and having left his son Constantine, but ten years old, under her guardianship, she so managed the nobility in her favour, as to get the regency and whole government of the state into her hands, and put a stop to the persecution of

the Catholics. Paul, patriarch of Constantinople, the third of that name, had been raised to that dignity by the late emperor. Though, contrary to the dictates of his own conscience, he had conformed in some respects to the then reigning heresy, he had however several good qualities; and was not only singularly beloved by the people for his charity to the poor, but highly esteemed by the empress and the whole court for his great prudence. Finding himself indisposed, and being touched with remorse for his condescension to the Iconoclasts in the former reign, without communicating his design to any one, he quitted the patriarchal see, and put on a religious habit in the monastery of Florus, in Constantinople. The empress was no sooner informed of it, but taking with her the young emperor, went to the monastery to dissuade a person so useful to her from persisting in such a resolution, but all in vain; for the patriarch assured them with tears, and bitter lamentations, that, in order to repair the scandal he had given, he had taken an unalterable resolution to end his days in that monastery; so desired them to provide the church of Constantinople with a worthy pastor in his room. Being asked whom he thought equal to the charge, he immediately named Tarasius, and dying soon after this declaration, Tarasius was accordingly chosen patriarch by the unanimous consent of the court, clergy, and people. Tarasius finding it in vain to oppose his election, declared, however, that he thought he could not in conscience accept of the government of a see which had been cut off from the catholic communion, but upon condition that a general council should be called to compose the disputes which divided the church at that time, in relation to holy images. This being agreed to, he was solemnly declared patriarch, and consecrated soon after, on Christmas-Day. He was

no sooner installed, but he sent his synodal letters to pope Adrian, to whom the empress also wrote in her own and her son's name on the subject of a general council; begging that he would either come in person, or at least send some venerable and learned men as his legates to Constantinople. Tarasius wrote likewise a letter to the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, wherein he desires them to send their respective legates to the intended council. His letter to the pope was to the same effect. The pope sent his legates, as desired, and wrote by them to the emperor, the empress, and the patriarch; applauded their zeal, showing at large the impiety of the Iconoclast heresy, insisting that the false council of the Iconoclasts, held under Copronymus for the establishment of Iconoclasm, should be first condemned in presence of his legates, and conjuring them before God to re-establish holy images at Constantinople, and in all Greece, on the footing they were before. He recommends to the emperor and empress his two legates to the council, who were Peter, archpriest of the Roman church, and Peter, priest and abbot of St. Sabas, in Rome. The eastern patriarchs being under the Saracen yoke, could not come for fear of giving offence to their jealous masters, who prohibited under the strictest penalties, all commerce with the empire. However, with much difficulty and through many dangers, they sent their deputies.

The legates of the pope and the oriental patriarchs being arrived, as also the bishops under their jurisdiction, the council was opened on the 1st of August, in the church of the apostles at Constantinople, in 786. But the assembly being disturbed by the violences of the Iconoclasts, and desired by the empress to break up and withdraw for the present, the council met again the year following in the church of St. Sophia, at Nice. The two legates from the pope are named first in the

Acts, St. Tarasius next, and after him the legates of the Oriental patriarchs, namely, John, priest and monk, for the patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem; and Thomas, priest and monk, for the patriarch of Alexandria. The council consisted of three hundred and fifty bishops, besides many abbots and other holy priests and confessors,[1] who having declared the sense of the present church, in relation to the matter in debate, which was found to be the allowing to holy pictures and images a relative honour, the council was closed with the usual acclamations and prayers for the prosperity of the emperor and empress. After which, synodal letters were sent to all the churches, and in particular to the pope, who approved the council.

The good patriarch, pursuant to the decrees of the synod, restored holy images throughout the extent of his jurisdiction. He also laboured zealously to abolish simony, and wrote a letter upon that subject to pope Adrian, in which, by saying it was the glory of the Roman church to preserve the purity of the priesthood, he intimated that that church was free from this reproach. The life of this holy patriarch was a model of perfection to his clergy and people. His table had nothing of the superfluity, nor his palace any thing of the magnificence, of several of his predecessors. He allowed himself very little time for sleep, being always up the first and last in his family. Reading and prayer filled all his leisure hours. It was his pleasure, in imitation of our blessed Redeemer, to serve others instead of being served by them; on which account he would scarce permit his own servants to do any thing for him. Loving humility in himself, he sought sweetly to induce all others to the love of that virtue. He banished the use of gold and

1 See *Note*, page 284.

scarlet from amongst the clergy, and laboured to extirpate all the irregularities among the people. His charity and love for the poor seemed to surpass his other virtues. He often took the dishes of meat from his table to distribute among them with his own hands: and he assigned them a large fixed revenue. And that none might be overlooked, he visited all the houses and hospitals in Constantinople. In Lent, especially, his bounty to them was incredible. His discourses were powerful exhortations to the universal mortification of the senses, and he was particularly severe against all theatrical entertainments. Some time after, the emperor became enamoured of Theodota, a maid of honour to his wife, the empress Mary, whom he had always hated; and forgetting what he owed to God, he was resolved to divorce her in 795, after seven years' cohabitation. He used all his efforts to gain the patriarch, and sent a principal officer to him for that purpose, accusing his wife of a plot to poison him. St. Tarasius answered the messenger, saying, "I know not how the emperor can bear the infamy of so scandalous an action in the sight of the universe: nor how he will be able to hinder or punish adulteries and debaucheries, if he himself set such an example. Tell him that I will rather suffer death and all manner of torments than consent to his design." The emperor hoping to prevail with him by flattery, sent for him to the palace, and said to him, "I can conceal nothing from you, whom I regard as my father. No one can deny but I may divorce one who has attempted my life. She deserves death or perpetual penance." He then produced a vessel, as he pretended, full of the poison prepared for him. The patriarch, with good reason, judging the whole to be only an artful contrivance to impose upon him, answered, that he was too well convinced that his passion for Theodota was at the bottom of all

his complaints against the empress. He added, that though she were guilty of the crime he laid to her charge, his second marriage during her life, with any other, would still be contrary to the law of God, and that he would draw upon himself the censures of the church, by attempting it. The monk John, who had been legate of the eastern patriarchs in the seventh council, being present, spoke also very resolutely to the emperor on the subject, so that the pretors and patricians threatened to stab him on the spot: and the emperor, boiling with rage, drove them both from his presence. As soon as they were gone, he turned the empress Mary out of his palace, and obliged her to put on a religious veil. Tarasius persisting in his refusal to marry him to Theodota, the ceremony was performed by Joseph, treasurer of the church of Constantinople. This scandalous example was the occasion of several governors and other powerful men divorcing their wives or taking more than one at the same time, and gave great encouragement to public lewdness. SS. Plato and Theodorus separated themselves from the emperor's communion to show their abhorrence of his crime. But Tarasius did not think it prudent to proceed to excommunication, as he had threatened, apprehensive that the violence of his temper, when further provoked, might carry him still greater lengths, and prompt him to re-establish the heresy which he had taken such effectual measures to suppress. Thus the patriarch, by his moderation prevented the ruin of religion, but drew upon himself the emperor's resentment, who persecuted him many ways during the remainder of his reign. Not content to set spies and guards over him under the name of Syncelli, who watched all his actions, and suffered no one to speak to him without their leave, he banished many of his domestics and relations. This confinement gave the

saint the more leisure for contemplation, and he never ceased in it to recommend his flock to God. The ambitious Irene, finding that all her contrivances to render her son odious to his subjects had proved ineffectual to her design, which was to engross the whole power to herself, having gained over to her party the principal officers of the court and army, she made him prisoner, and caused his eyes to be plucked out; this was executed with so much violence that the unhappy prince died of it in 797. After this she reigned alone five years, during which she recalled all the banished; but at length met with the deserved reward of her ambition and cruelty from Nicephorus, a patrician, and the treasurer general; who, in 802, usurped the empire, and having deposed her, banished her into the isle of Lesbos, where she soon after died with grief.

St. Tarasius, on the death of the late emperor, having interdicted and deposed the treasurer, Joseph, who had married and crowned Theodota, St. Plato, and others, who had censured his lenity, became thoroughly reconciled to him. The saint, under his successor Nicephorus, persevered peaceably in his practices of penance, and in the functions of his pastoral charge. In his last sickness he still continued to offer daily the holy sacrifice as long as he was able to move. A little before his death he fell into a kind of trance, as the author of his life, who was an eye-witness, relates, wherein he was heard to dispute and argue with a number of accusers, very busy in sifting his whole life, and objecting all they could to it. He seemed in a great fright and agitation on this account, and, defending himself, answered every thing laid to his charge. This filled all present with fear, seeing the endeavours of the enemy of man to find something to condemn even in the life of so holy and so irreprehensible a bishop. But a great serenity succeeded, and

the holy man gave up his soul to God in peace, on the 25th of February, in 806, having sat twenty-one years and two months. God honoured his memory with miracles, some of which are related by the author of his life. His festival began to be celebrated under his successor. The Latin and Greek churches both honour his memory on this day. Fourteen years after his decease, Leo the Armenian, the Iconoclast emperor, dreamt a little before his own death, that he saw St. Tarasius highly incensed against him, and heard him command one Michael to stab him. Leo judging this Michael to be a monk in the saint's monastery, ordered him the next morning to be sought for, and even tortured some of the religious to oblige them to a discovery of the person: but it happened there was none of that name among them; and Leo was killed six days after by Michael Balbus.

The virtue of St. Tarasius was truly great, because constant and crowned with perseverance, though exposed to continual dangers of illusion or seduction, amidst the artifices of hypocrites and a wicked court. St. Chrysostom observes,[1] that the path of virtue is narrow, and lies between precipices, in which it is easier for the traveller to be seized with giddiness even near the end of his course, and fall. Hence this father most grievously laments the misfortune of king Ozias, who after long practising the most heroic virtues, fell, and perished through pride; and he strenuously exhorts all who walk in the service of God, constantly to live in fear, watchfulness, humility, and compunction. "A soul," says he, "often wants not so much spurring in the beginning of her conversion; her own fervour and cheerfulness make her run vigorously. But this fervour, unless it be continually nourished, cools

1 Chrysos. Hom. 3. de Ozia, t. 6. p. 14. ed. Ben.

by degrees: then the devil assails her with all his might. Pirates wait for and principally attack ships when they are upon the return home laden with riches, rather than empty vessels going out of the port. Just so the devil when he sees that a soul has gathered great spiritual riches, by fasts, prayer, alms, chastity, and all other virtues, when he sees our vessel fraught with rich commodities, then he falls upon her, and seeks on all sides to break in. What exceedingly aggravates the evil, is the extreme difficulty of ever rising again after such a fall. To err in the beginning may be in part a want of experience; but to fall after a long course is mere negligence, and can deserve no excuse or pardon."

Note.—In the third session the letters of the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem were read, all teaching the same doctrine of paying a relative honour to sacred images, no less than the letters of pope Adrian. Their deputies, John and Thomas, then added, that the absence of those patriarchs could not affect the authority of the council, because the tyranny under which they lived made their presence impossible, and because they had sent their deputies and professions of faith by letter: that none of the oriental patriarchs had been at the sixth general council, labouring then under the yoke of the barbarians; yet it was not less an œcumenical synod, especially "as the apostolic Roman pope agreed to it, and presided in it by his legates." This is a clear testimony of the eastern churches in favour of the authority of the holy see in general councils, and it cannot in the least be suspected of flattery. In the fourth session were read many passages of the fathers in favour of the relative honour due to holy images. After which, all cried out, they were sons of obedience, who placed their glory in following the tradition of their holy mother the church; and they pronounced many anathemas against all image-breakers, that is, those who do not honour holy images, or those who call them idols. In the end they add a confession of faith, in which they declare, that they honour the mother of God, who is above all the heavenly powers: then the angels, apostles, prophets, martyrs, doctors, and all the saints; as also their pictures: for though the angels are incorporeal, they have appeared like men. This profession of faith was subscribed by the pope's legates, St. Tarasius, the legates of the three other patriarchs, and three hundred and one bishops present, besides a great many priests and deacons, deputies of absent bishops, and by one hundred and thirty abbots. In the fifth session were read many passages of fathers falsified and corrupted by the Iconoclasts, as was clearly shown. The archpriest, the pope's legate, demanded that an image should be then set up in the midst of the assembly, and honoured by all, which was done; and that the books written against holy images might be condemned and burned, which the council also ratified. In the sixth session the sham council of the Iconoclasts under Copronymus was condemned and refuted as to every

article: as first, that it falsely styled itself a *general* council; for it was not received but anathematized by the other bishops of the church. Secondly, because the pope of Rome had no ways concurred to it, neither by himself nor by his legates, nor by a circular letter according to the custom of councils: nor had the western bishops assisted at it. Thirdly, there had not been obtained any consent of the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, nor of the bishops of their respective districts. These are conditions necessary to a general council, which were all wanting to that sham synod. The council goes on refuting it, because it accused the church of idolatry; which is giving the lie to Christ, whose kingdom, according to scripture, is everlasting, and whose power over hell can never be wrested from him. To accuse the whole church is to do an injury to Christ. They added, that the sham synod had contradicted itself by admitting that the six general councils had preserved the faith entire, and yet condemned the use of images which it must allow to be more ancient than the sixth council, and which is of as great antiquity as the apostolic age. And that whereas the same synod had advanced that the clergy being fallen into idolatry, God had raised faithful emperors to destroy the fortresses of the devil; the council of Nice vehemently condemns this, because the bishops are the depositaries of tradition, and not the emperors. It adds, that the Iconoclasts falsely called the blessed Eucharist the only image, for it is not an image nor a figure, but the true body and blood of Christ. In the seventh session was read the definition of faith, declaring, that images ought to be set up in churches as well as crosses, (which last the Iconoclasts allowed of,) also to be figured on the sacred vessels and ornaments, on the walls, ceilings, houses, &c. For the oftener people behold holy images or pictures, the oftener are they excited to the remembrance of what they represent: that these images are to be honoured, but not with the worship called Latria, which can only be given to God: that they shall be honoured with incense and candles, as the cross, the gospels, and other holy things are; all according to the pious customs of the ancients. For the honour paid to images, passes to the archetypes, or things represented, and he who reveres the image reveres the person it represents. This the council declared to be the doctrine of the fathers, and tradition of the Catholic church.

ST. VICTORINUS, AND SIX COMPANIONS, MARTYRS.

From their genuine acts published from the Chaldaic by Assemani.

A. D. 284.

THESE seven martyrs were citizens of Corinth, and confessed their faith before Tertius the proconsul, in their own country, in 249, in the beginning of the reign of Decius. After their torments they passed into Egypt, whether by compulsion or by voluntary banishment is not known, and there finished their martyrdom at Diospolis, capital of Thebais, in the reign of Numerian, in

284, under the governor Sabinus. After the governor had tried the constancy of the martyrs by racks, scourges, and various inventions of cruelty, he caused Victorinus to be thrown into a great mortar (the Greek Menology says, of marble.) The executioners began by pounding his feet and legs, saying to him at every stroke, "Spare yourself, wretch. It depends upon you to escape this death, if you will only renounce your new God." The prefect grew furious at his constancy, and at length commanded his head to be beat to pieces. The sight of this mortar, so far from casting a damp on his companions, seemed to inspire them with the greater ardour to be treated in the like manner. So that when the tyrant threatened Victor with the same death, he only desired him to hasten the execution; and, pointing to the mortar, said, "In that is salvation and true felicity prepared for me!" He was immediately cast into it and beaten to death. Nicephorus, the third martyr, was impatient of delay, and leaped of his own accord into the bloody mortar. The judge enraged at his boldness, commanded not one, but many executioners at once to pound him in the same manner. He caused Claudian the fourth to be chopped in pieces, and his bleeding joints to be thrown at the feet of those that were yet living. He expired, after his feet, hands, arms, legs, and thighs were cut off. The tyrant, pointing to his mangled limbs and scattered bones, said to the other three, "It concerns you to avoid this punishment; I do not compel you to suffer." The martyrs answered with one voice, "On the contrary, we rather pray that if you have any other more exquisite torment you would inflict it on us. We are determined never to violate the fidelity which we owe to God, or to deny Jesus Christ our Saviour, for he is our God, from whom we have our being, and to whom alone we aspire." The tyrant be-

came almost distracted with fury, and commanded Diodorus to be burnt alive, Serapion to be beheaded, and Papias to be drowned. This happened on the 25th of February; on which day the Roman and other western Martyrologies name them; but the Greek Menæa, and the Menology of the emperor Basil Porphyrogenitus honour them on the 21st of January, the day of their confession at Corinth.

ST. WALBURGE,[1] V. ABBESS

SHE was daughter to the holy king St. Richard, and sister to SS. Willibald and Winebald; was born in the kingdom of the West-Saxons in England, and educated in the monastery of Winburn in Dorsetshire, where she took the religious veil. After having passed twenty-seven years in this holy nunnery, she was sent by the abbess Tetta, under the conduct of St. Lioba, with several others, into Germany, at the request of her cousin St. Boniface.[2] Her first settlement in that country was under St. Lioba, in the monastery of Bischofsheim, in the diocess of Mentz. Two years after she was appointed abbess of a nunnery founded by her two brothers, at Heidenheim in Suabia, (now subject to the duke of Wirtemburg,)

1 This saint is corruptly called, in Perche, St. Gauburge, in Normandy and Champagne St. Vaubourg, about Luzon, St. Falbourg, in other parts of Poitou, St. Avougourg, in Germany, Walburge, Waltpurde, Walpourc, and in some places Warpurg. Her English-Saxon name Walburge is the same with the Greek Eucharia, and signifies gracious. See Camden's Remains.

2 St. Boniface being sensible of how great importance it is for the public advantage of the church, and the general advancement of the kingdom of Christ in the souls of men, called over from England into Germany many holy nuns whom he judged best qualified to instruct and train up others in the maxims and spirit of the gospel. Among these he placed St. Tecla, in the monastery of Kitzingen, founded by Alheide, daughter of king Pepin; St. Lioba was appointed by him abbess at Bischofsheim; St. Cunihilt, aunt of St. Lullus, and her daughter Berathgit, called also Bergitis, were mistresses of religious schools in Thuringia, and were honoured in that country among the saints. Cunihildis is also called Gunthildis and Bilhildis. See Thuringia Sacra, printed at Frankfort, an. 1737.

where her brother, St. Winebald, took upon him at the same time the government of an abbey of monks. This town is situated in the diocess of Aichstadt, in Franconia, upon the borders of Bavaria, of which St. Willibald, our saint's other brother, had been consecrated bishop by St. Boniface. So eminent was the spirit of evangelical charity, meekness, and piety, which all the words and actions of St. Walburge breathed, and so remarkable was the fruit which her zeal and example produced in others, that when St. Winebald died, in 760, she was charged with a superintendency also over the abbey of monks till her death. St. Willibald caused the remains of their brother Winebald to be removed to Aichstadt, sixteen years after his death; at which ceremony St. Walburge assisted. Two years after she passed herself to her eternal rest, on the 25th of February, in 779, having lived twenty-five years at Heidenheim.

Her relics were translated, in the year 870, to Aichstadt, on the 21st of September, and the principal part still remains there in the church anciently called of the Holy Cross, but since that time of St. Walburge. A considerable portion is venerated with singular devotion at Furnes, where, by the pious zeal of Baldwin, surnamed of Iron, it was received on the 25th of April, and enshrined on the 1st of May, on which day her chief festival is placed in the Belgic Martyrologies, imitated by Baronius in the Roman. From Furnes certain small parts have been distributed in several other towns in the Low Countries, especially at Antwerp, Brussels, Tiel, Arnhem, Groningue, and Zutphen; also Cologne, Wirtemberg, Ausberg, Christ Church at Canterbury, and other places, were enriched with particles of this treasure from Aichstadt. St. Walburge is titular saint of many other great churches in Germany, Brabant, Flanders, and several provinces of France, especially in Poiton, Perche, Normandy, Burgundy, Lorraine, Alsace, &c. Her festival, on account of various translations of her relics, is marked on several days of the year, but the principal is kept in most places on the day of her death. A portion of her relics was preserved in a rich shrine in the repository of relics in the electoral palace of Hanover, as appears from the catalogue printed in folio at Hanover in 1713. See her life written by Wolfhard, a devout priest of Aichstadt, in the following century, about the year 890; again by Adelbold.

SAINT CÆSARIUS, C.

He was a physician, and brother to St. Gregory Nazianzen. When the latter repaired to

Cæsarea, in Palestine, where the sacred studies flourished, Cæsarius went to Alexandria, and with incredible success ran through the circle of the sciences, amongst which oratory, philosophy, and especially medicine, fixed his attention. In this last he became the first man of his age. He perfected himself in this profession at Constantinople, but excused himself from settling there, as the city and the emperor Constantius earnestly requested him to do. He was afterward recalled thither, singularly honoured by Julian the Apostate, nominated his first physician, and excepted in several edicts which that prince published against the Christians. He resisted strenuously the insinuating discourses and artifices with which that prince endeavoured to seduce him, and was prevailed upon by the remonstrances of his father and brother to resign his places at court, and prefer a retreat, whatever solicitations Julian could use to detain him. Jovian honourably restored him, and Valens, moreover, created him treasurer of his own private purse, and of Bithynia. A narrow escape in an earthquake at Nice, in Bithynia, in 368, worked so powerfully on his mind, that he renounced the world, and died shortly after, in the beginning of the year 369, leaving the poor his heirs.

The Greeks honour his memory on the 9th of March, as Nicephorus testifies, (Hist. l. 11. c. 19.) and as appears from the Menæa: in the Roman Martyrology he is named on the 25th of February.

FEBRUARY XXVI.

ST. ALEXANDER, CONFESSOR,

PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA.

From Theodoret, St. Athanasius, Hermant, Tillemont.

A. D. 326.

St. Alexander succeeded St. Achillas in the

see of Alexandria, in 313. He was a man of apostolic doctrine and life, mild, affable, exceeding charitable to the poor, and full of faith, zeal, and fervour. He assumed to the sacred ministry chiefly those who had first sanctified themselves in holy solitude, and was happy in the choice of bishops throughout all Egypt. The devil, enraged to see the havoc made in his usurped empire over mankind, by the disrepute idolatry was generally fallen into, used his utmost endeavours to repair the loss to his infernal kingdom, by procuring the establishment of a most impious heresy. Arius a priest of Alexandria, was his principal instrument for that purpose. This heresiarch was well versed in profane literature, was a subtle dialectitian, had an exterior show of virtue, and an insinuating behaviour; but was a monster of pride, vain glory, ambition, envy, and jealousy. Under an affected modesty he concealed a soul full of deceit, and capable of all crimes. He joined Meletius, the bishop of Lycopolis, in the beginning of his schism against St. Peter, our saint's predecessor, in 300: but quitting that party after some time, St. Peter was so well satisfied of the sincerity of his repentance, that he ordained him deacon. Soon after Arius discovered his turbulent spirit, in accusing his archbishop, and raising disturbances in favour of the Meletians. This obliged St. Peter to excommunicate him, nor could he ever be induced to revoke that sentence. But his successor, St. Achillas, upon his repentance, admitted him to his communion, ordained him priest, and made him curate of the church of Baucales, one of the quarters of Alexandria. Giving way to spite and envy, on seeing St. Alexander preferred before him to the see of Alexandria,[1] he became his mortal enemy: and as the saint's life and conduct were irreproachable, all his endeavours to oppose

1 Theodoret, l. 1. c. 1. Socrates, l. 1. c. 5.

him were levelled at his doctrine, in opposition to which the heresiarch denied the divinity of Christ. This error he at first taught only in private; but having, about the year 319, gained followers to support him, he boldly advanced his blasphemies in his sermons, affirming, with Ebion, Artemas, and Theodotus, that Christ was not truly God; adding, what no heretic had before asserted in such a manner, that the Son was a creature, and made out of nothing; that there was a time when he did not exist, and that he was capable of sinning, with other such impieties. St. Athanasius informs us,[1] that he also held that Christ had no other soul than this created divinity or spiritual substance made before the world: consequently, that it truly suffered on the cross, descended into hell, and rose again from the dead. Arius engaged in his errors two other curates of the city, a great many virgins, twelve deacons, seven priests, and two bishops.

One Colluthus, another curate of Alexandria, and many others, declaimed loudly against these blasphemies. The heretics were called Arians, and these called the Catholics Colluthians. St. Alexander, who was one of the mildest of men, first made use of soft and gentle methods to recover Arius to the truth, and endeavoured to gain him by sweetness and exhortations. Several were offended at his lenity, and Colluthus carried his resentment so far as to commence a schism; but this was soon at an end, and the author of it returned to the Catholic communion. But St. Alexander, finding Arius's party increase, and all his endeavours to reclaim him ineffectual, he summoned him to appear in an assembly of his clergy, where, being found obstinate and incorrigible, he was excommunicated together with his adherents. This sentence of excommunication the saint confirmed soon after, about the

1 L. de Adv. Chr. p. 635.

end of the year 320, in a council at Alexandria, at the head of near one hundred bishops, at which Arius was also present, who repeating his former blasphemies, and adding still more horrible ones, was unanimously condemned by the synod, which loaded him and all his followers with anathemas. Arius lay hid for some time after this in Alexandria, but being discovered, went into Palestine, and found means to gain over to his party Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, also Theognis of Nice, and Eusebius of Nicomedia, which last was of all others his most declared protector, and had great authority with the emperor Constantine, who resided even at Nicomedia, or rather with his sister Constantia. Yet it is clear from Constantine himself, that he was a wicked, proud, ambitious, intriguing man. It is no wonder, after his other crimes, that he became an heresiarch, and that he should have an ascendant over many weak, but well-meaning men, on account of his high credit and reputation at court. After several letters that had passed between these two serpents, Arius retired to him at Nicomedia, and there composed his Thalia, a poem stuffed with his own praises, and his impious heresies.

Alexander wrote to the pope, St. Sylvester, and, in a circular letter, to the other bishops of the church, giving them an account of Arius's heresy and condemnation. Arius, Eusebius, and many others, wrote to our saint, begging that he would take off his censures. The emperor Constantine also exhorted him by letter to a reconciliation with Arius, and sent it by the great Osius to Alexandria, with express orders to procure information of the state of the affair. The deputy returned to the emperor better informed of the heresiarch's impiety and malice, and the zeal, virtue, and prudence of St. Alexander: and having given him a just and faithful account of the matter, convinced him of the necessity of a general

council, as the only remedy adequate to the growing evil, and capable of restoring peace to the church. St Alexander had already sent him the same advice in several letters.[1] That prince accordingly, by letters of respect, invited the bishops to Nice, in Bithynia, and defrayed their expenses. They assembled in the imperial palace of Nice, on the 19th of June, in 325, being three hundred and eighteen in number, the most illustrious prelates of the church, among whom were many glorious confessors of the faith. The principal were our saint, St. Eustathius, patriarch of Antioch, St. Macarius of Jerusalem, Cecilian, archbishop of Carthage, St. Paphnutius, St. Potamon, St. Paul of Neocesarea, St James of Nisibis, &c. St. Silvester could not come in person, by reason of his great age; but he sent his legates, who presided in his name.[2] The emperor Con-

1 Rufinus (l. 1. Hist. c. 1.) says, that the council was assembled by the advice of the priests. Ex sacerdotum sententia. And the third council of Constantinople attributes its convocation to St. Sylvester as much as to the emperor. Constantinus et Sylvester magnam in Nicea synodum congregabant. Conc. Constantinopolitanum tertium, Act. 18. p. 1049. t. 6. Conc.

2 This is acknowledged by the oriental bishops assembled at Constantinople, in 552, (t. 5. Conc. p. 337, 338.) The legates were Vito, or Victor, and Vincent, two Roman priests, to whom the pope joined Osius, bishop of Cordova, as being the most renowned prelate of the West, and highly esteemed by the emperor. Ipse etiam Osius ex Hispanis nominis et famæ celebritate insignis, qui Sylvestri episcopi maximæ Romæ locum obtinebat, una cum Romanis presbyteris Vitone et Vincentio adfuit; says Gelasius of Cyzicus. (Hist. Conc. Nicen. l. 2. c. 5. t. 2. Conc. p. 155.) The same is affirmed by pope Adrian. (t. 6. Conc. p. 1810.) In all the editions of this council, Osius, with the two priests, Vito and Vincent, is first named among the subscribers. Socrates also names them first, and before the patriarchs. Osius Episc. Cordubæ, ita credo, ut sup. dictum est. Vito et Vincentius presbyteri urbis Romæ. Egypti Alexander Episc. Antiochiæ Eustathius, &c. (Socr. l. 1. c. 13.) It is then false what Blondel (de la primauté de l'Eglise, p. 1195.) pretends, that St. Eustathius of Antioch presided. He is indeed called, by Facundus, (l. 8. c. 1. & l. 11. c. 1.) the first of the council; and by Nicephorus, (Chronol. p. 146.) the chief of the bishops, because he was the first among the orientals; for St. Alexander of Egypt was certainly before him in rank. Theodoret (l. 1. c. 6.) says, he sat the first on the right hand in the assembly. And it appears from Eusebius, that the pope's legates and the patriarch of Alexandria sat at the head on the left side. This might be the more honourable on several accounts, as being on the right to those that came in. It is certain that the pope's legates presided in the

stantine entered the council without guards, nor would he sit till he was desired by the bishops, says Eusebius.[1] Theodoret says,[2] that he asked the bishops' leave before he would enter.

The blasphemies of Arius, who was himself present, were canvassed for several days. Marcellus of Ancyra, and St. Athanasius, whom St. Alexander had brought with him, and whom he treated with the greatest esteem, discovered all the impiety they contained, and confuted the Arians with invincible strength. The heretics, fearing the indignation of the council, used a great deal of dissimulation in admitting the Catholic terms. The fathers, to exclude all their subtilties, declared the Son consubstantial to the Father, which they inserted in the profession of their faith, called the Nicene creed, which was drawn up by Osius, and to which all subscribed, except a small number of Arians. At first they were seventeen, but Eusebius of Cæsarea received the creed the day following, as did all the others, except five, namely, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nice, Maris of Chalcedon, Theonas and Secundus of Lybia, the two bishops who had first joined Arius. Of these also Eusebius, Maris, and Theognis conformed through fear of banishment. The Arian historian Philostorgius[3] pretends to excuse his heroes, Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis, by saying they inserted an iota, and signed[4] like in substance, instead of [5] of the same substance; a fraud in religion which would no way have excused their hypocrisy. Arius, Theonas, and Secundus, with some Egyptian priests, were banished by the order of Constantine, and Illyricum was the place of their exile. The

council of Chalcedon, where they, in the same manner, sat first on the left, above the patriarch of Alexandria, and the patriarch of Antioch was placed on the right.

1 L. 3. de vit. Constant. c. 10. 2 L. 1. c. 7.

3 L. 1. c. 9. 4 Ὁμοιούσιος. 5 Ὁμοούσιος.

council received Meletius and his schismatical adherents upon their repentance; but they afterward relapsed into their schism, and part of them joined the Arians. The council added twenty canons of discipline, and was closed about the 25th of August.[1] Constantine gave all the prelates a magnificent entertainment, and dismissed them with great presents to their respective sees. St. Alexander, after this triumph of the faith returned to Alexandria; where after having recommended St. Athanasius for his successor, he died in 326, on the 26th of Feburary, on which day he is mentioned in the Roman Martyrology.

A true disciple of Christ, by a sincere spirit of humility and distrust in himself, is, as it were, naturally inclined to submission to all authority appointed by God, in which he finds his peace, security, and joy. This happy disposition of his soul is his secure fence against the illusions of self-sufficiency and blind pride, which easily betrays men into the most fatal errors. On the contrary, pride is a spirit of revolt and independence: he who is possessed of this devil is fond of his own conceits, self-confident, and obstinate. However strong the day-light of evidence may be in itself, such an one will endeavour to shut up all the avenues of light, though some beams force themselves into his soul to disturb his repose, and strike deep the sting of remorse: jealousy and a love of opposition foster the disorder, and render it incurable. This is the true portraiture of Arius, and other heresiarchs and firebrands of the universe. Can we sufficiently detest jealousy and pride, the fatal source of so great evils? Do we not discover, by fatal symptoms, that we ourselves harbour this monster in our breasts? Should the eye be jealous that the ear hears, and disturb the functions of this or the other senses, instead of

1 The Arabic canons are falsely ascribed to the Nicene council, being collected out of other ancient synods.

regarding them as its own, and enjoying their mutual advantage and comfort, what confusion would ensue!

ST. PORPHYRIUS, BISHOP OF GAZA, CONFESSOR.

From his life, written with great accuracy by his faithful disciple Mark.

A. D. 420.

PORPHYRIUS, a native of Thessalonica in Macedonia, was of a noble and wealthy family. The desire of renouncing the world made him leave his friends and country at twenty-five years of age, in 378, to pass into Egypt, where he consecrated himself to God in a famous monastery in the desert of Sceté. After five years spent there in the penitential exercises of a monastic life, he went into Palestine to visit the holy places of Jerusalem. After this he took up his abode in a cave near the Jordan, where he passed other five years in great austerity, till he fell sick, when a complication of disorders obliged him to leave that place and return to Jerusalem. There he never failed daily to visit devoutly all the holy places, leaning on a staff, for he was too weak to stand upright. It happened about the same time that Mark, an Asiatic, and the author of his life, came to Jerusalem with the same intent, where he made some stay. He was much edified at the devotion with which Porphyrius continually visited the place of our Lord's resurrection, and the other oratories. And seeing him one day labour with great pain in getting up the stairs in the chapel built by Constantine, he ran to him to offer him his assistance, which Porphyrius refused saying, "It is not just that I who am come hither to beg pardon for my sins, should be eased by any one: rather let me undergo some labour

and inconvenience, that God, beholding it may have compassion on me." He in this condition never omitted his usual visits of piety to the holy places, and daily partook of the mystical table, that is, of the holy sacrament. And as to his distemper, so much did he contemn it, that he seemed to be sick in another's body and not in his own. His confidence in God always supported him. The only thing which afflicted him was, that his fortune had not been sold before this for the use of the poor. This he commissioned Mark to do for him, who accordingly set out for Thessalonica, and in three months' time returned to Jerusalem with money and effects to the value of four thousand five hundred pieces of gold. When the blessed man saw him, he embraced him, with tears of joy for his safe and speedy return. But Porphyrius was now so well recovered, that Mark scarce knew him to be the same person: for his body had no signs of its former decay, and his face looked full, fresh, and painted with a healthy red. He, perceiving his friend's amazement at his healthy looks, said to him with a smile, "Be not surprised, Mark, to see me in perfect health and strength, but admire the unspeakable goodness of Christ, who can easily cure what is despaired of by men." Mark asked him by what means he had recovered. He replied, "Forty days ago, being in extreme pain, I made a shift to reach Mount Calvary, where, fainting away, I fell into a kind of trance or ecstasy, during which I seemed to see our Saviour on the cross, and the good thief in the same condition near him. I said to Christ, *Lord, Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom:* whereupon he ordered the thief to come to my assistance, who, raising me off the ground on which I lay, bade me go to Christ. I ran to him, and he, coming off his cross, said to me, *Take this wood* (meaning his cross) *into thy custody.* In obedience to him, methought I laid

it on my shoulders and carried it some way. I awaked soon after, and have been free from pain ever since, and without the least appearance of my having ever ailed any thing." Mark was so edified with the holy man's discourse and good example, that he became more penetrated with esteem and affection for him than ever, which made him desirous of living always with him in order to his own improvement; for he seemed to have attained to a perfect mastery over all his passions: he was endued at the same time with a divine prudence, an eminent spirit of prayer, and the gift of tears. Being also well versed in the holy scriptures and spiritual knowledge, and no stranger to profane learning, he confounded all the infidels and heretics who attempted to dispute with him. As to the money and effects which Mark had brought him, he distributed all among the necessitous in Palestine and Egypt, so that in a very short time, he had reduced himself to the necessity of labouring for his daily food. He therefore learned to make shoes and dress leather, while Mark, being well skilled in writing, got a handsome livelihood by copying books, and to spare. He therefore desired the saint to partake of his earnings. But Porphyrius replied, in the words of St. Paul, *He that doth not work let him not eat.* He led this laborious and penitential life till he was forty years of age, when the bishop of Jerusalem ordained him priest, though much against his will, and committed to him the keeping of the holy cross: this was in 393. The saint changed nothing in his austere penitential life, feeding only upon roots and the coarsest bread, and not eating till after sunset, except on Sundays and holydays, when he eat at noon, and added a little oil and cheese; and on account of a great weakness of stomach, he mingled a very small quantity of wine in the water he drank. This was his method of living till his death. Being

elected bishop of Gaza, in 396, John, the metropolitan and archbishop of Cæsarea, wrote to the patriarch of Jerusalem to desire him to send over Porphyrius, that he might consult him on certain difficult passages of scripture. He was sent accordingly, but charged to be back in seven days. Porphyrius, receiving this order, seemed at first disturbed, but said, "God's will be done." That evening he called Mark, and said to him, "Brother Mark, let us go and venerate the holy places and the sacred cross, for it will be long before we shall do it again." Mark asked him why he said so. He answered, Our Saviour had appeared to him the night before, and said, "Give up the treasure of the cross which you have in custody, for I will marry you to a wife, poor indeed and despicable, but of great piety and virtue. Take care to adorn her well; for however contemptible she may appear, she is my sister." "This," said he, "Christ signified to me last night: and I fear, in consequence, my being charged with the sins of others, whilst I labour to expiate my own; but the will of God must be obeyed." When they had venerated the holy places and the sacred cross, and Porphyrius had prayed long before it, and with many tears, he shut up the cross in its golden case, and delivered the keys to the bishop; and having obtained his blessing, he and his disciple Mark set out the next day, with three others, among whom was one Barochas, a person whom the saint had found lying in the street almost dead, and had taken care of, cured, and instructed; who ever after served him with Mark. They arrived the next day, which was Saturday, at Cæsarea. The archbishop obliged them to sup with him. After spiritual discourses they took a little sleep, and then rose to assist at the night service. Next morning the archbishop bid the Gazæans lay hold on St. Porphyrius, and, while they held him, ordained him bishop. They holy man wept bitter-

ly, and was inconsolable for being promoted to a dignity he judged himself so unfit for. The Gazæans, however, performed their part in endeavouring to comfort him; and, having assisted at the Sunday office, and stayed one day more at Cæsarea, they set out for Gaza, lay at Diospolis, and, late on Wednesday night, arrived at Gaza, much harassed and fatigued. For the heathens living in the villages near Gaza, having notice of their coming, had so damaged the roads in several places, and clogged them with thorns and logs of wood, that they were scarce passable. They also contrived to raise such a smoke and stench, that the holy men were in danger of being blinded or suffocated.

There happened that year a very great drought, which the pagans ascribed to the coming of the new Christian bishop, saying that their god Marnas had foretold that Porphyrius would bring public calamities and disasters on their city. In Gaza stood a famous temple of that idol, which the emperor Theodosius the Elder had commanded to be shut up, but not demolished, on account of its beautiful structure. The governor afterward had permitted the heathens to open it again. As no rain fell the two first months after Saint Porphyrius's arrival, the idolaters, in great affliction, assembled in this temple to offer sacrifices, and make supplications to their god Marnas, whom they called the Lord of rains. These they repeated for seven days, going also to a place of prayer out of the town but seeing all their endeavours ineffectual, they lost all hopes of a supply of what they so much wanted. A dearth ensuing, the Christians, to the number of two hundred and eighty, women and children included, after a day's fast, and watching the following night in prayer, by the order of their holy bishop, went out in procession to St. Timothy's church, in which lay the relics of the holy mar-

tyr St. Meuris, and of the confessor St. Thees, singing hymns of divine praise. But at their return to the city they found the gates shut against them, which the heathens refused to open. In this situation the Christians, and St. Porphyrius above the rest, addressed almighty God with redoubled fervour for the blessing so much wanted; when in a short time, the clouds gathering, as at the prayers of Elias, there fell such a quantity of rain that the heathens opened their gates, and, joining them, cried out, "Christ alone is God: He alone has overcome." They accompanied the Christians to the Church to thank God for the benefit received, which was attended with the conversion of one hundred and seventy-six persons, whom the saint instructed, baptized, and confirmed, as he did one hundred and five more before the end of that year. The miraculous preservation of the life of a pagan woman in labour, who had been despaired of, occasioned the conversion of that family and others, to the number of sixty-four.

The heathens, perceiving their number decrease, grew very troublesome to the Christians, whom they excluded from commerce and all public offices, and injured them all manner of ways. St. Porphyrius, to screen himself and his flock from their outrages and vexations, had recourse to the emperor's protection. On this errand he sent Mark, his disciple to Constantinople, and went afterward himself in company with John, his metropolitan, archbishop of Cæsarea. Here they applied themselves to St. John Chrysostom, who joyfully received them, and recommended them to the eunuch Amantius, who had great credit with the empress, and was a zealous servant of God. Amantius having introduced them to the empress, she received them with great distinction, assured them of her protection, and begged their prayers for her safe delivery, a

favour she received a few days after. She desired them in another visit to sign her and her new-born son, Theodosius the Younger, with the sign of the cross, which they did. The young prince was baptized with great solemnity, and on that occasion the empress obtained from the emperor all that the bishops had requested, and in particular that the temples of Gaza should be demolished; an imperial edict being drawn up for this purpose and delivered to Cynegius, a virtuous patrician, and one full of zeal, to see it executed. They stayed at Constantinople during the feast of Easter, and at their departure the emperor and empress bestowed on them great presents. When they landed in Palestine, near Gaza, the Christians came out to meet them with a cross carried before them, singing hymns. In the place called Tetramphodos, or Four-ways-end, stood a marble statue of Venus, on a marble altar, which was in great reputation for giving oracles to young women about the choice of husbands, but had often grossly deceived them, engaging them in most unhappy marriages; so that many heathens detested its lying impostures. As the two bishops, with the procession of the Christians, and the cross borne before them, passed through that square, this idol fell down of itself, and was broken to pieces: whereupon thirty-two men and seven women were converted.

Ten days after arrived Cynegius, having with him a consular man, and a duke, or general, with a strong guard of soldiers, besides the civil magistrates of the country. He assembled the citizens and read to them the emperor's edict, commanding their idols and temples to be destroyed, which was accordingly executed, and no less than eight public temples in the city were burnt; namely, those of the Sun, Venus, Apollo, Proserpine, Hecate, the Hierion, or of the priests, Tycheon, or of Fortune, and Marnion, of Marnas,

their Jupiter. The Marnion, in which men had been often sacrificed, burned for many days. After this, the private houses and courts were all searched; the idols were every where burned or thrown into the common sewers, and all books of magic and superstition were cast into the flames. Many idolaters desired baptism; but the saint took a long time to make trial of them, and to prepare them for that sacrament by daily instructions. On the spot where the temple of Marnas had stood, was built the church of Eudoxia in the figure of a cross. She sent for this purpose precious pillars and rich marble from Constantinople. Of the marble taken out of the Marnion, St. Porphyrius made steps and a road to the church, that it might be trampled upon by men, dogs, swine, and other beasts; whence many heathens would never walk thereon. Before he would suffer the church to be begun he proclaimed a fast, and the next morning being attended by his clergy and all the Christians in the city, they went in a body to the place from the church Irene, singing the Venite exultemus Domino, and other psalms, and answering to every verse Alleluia, Barochas carrying a cross before them. They all set to work, carrying stones and other materials, and digging the foundations according to the plan marked out and directed by Rufinus, a celebrated architect, singing psalms and saying prayers during their work. It was begun in 403, when thirty high pillars arrived from Constantinople, two of which, called Carostiæ, shone like emeralds when placed in the church. It was five years a building, and when finished in 408, the holy bishop performed the consecration of it on Easter-Day with the greatest pomp and solemnity. His alms to the poor on that occasion seemed boundless, though they were always exceeding great. The good bishop spent the remainder of his life in the zeal-

ous discharge of all pastoral duties; and though he lived to see the city clear for the most part of the remains of Paganism, superstition and idolatry, he had always enough to suffer from such as continued obstinate in their errors. Falling sick, he made his pious will, in which he recommended all his dear flock to God. He died in 420, being about sixty years of age, on the 26th of February, on which day both the Greeks and Latins make mention of him. The pious author of his life concludes it, saying, "He is now in the paradise of delight, interceding for us with all the saints, by whose prayers may God have mercy on us."

ST. VICTOR, OR VITTRE OF ARCIES, OR ARCIS,

IN CHAMPAGNE, ANCHORET AND CONFESSOR, IN THE SEVENTH AGE.

He was of noble parentage in the diocess of Troyes in Champagne, educated under strict discipline in learning and piety, and a saint from his cradle. In his youth, prayer, fasting and alms-deeds were his chief delight, and, embracing an ecclesiastical state, he took orders; but the love of heavenly contemplation being always the prevalent inclination in his soul, he preferred close retirement to the mixed life of the care of souls. In this choice the Holy Ghost was his director, for he lived in continual union with God by prayer and contemplation, and seemed raised above the condition of this mortal life, and almost as if he lived without a body. God glorified him by many miracles; but the greatest seems to have been the powerful example of his life. We have two pious panegyrics made upon this saint by St. Bernard, who says,[1] "Now placed in heaven, he beholds God clearly revealed to

1 Serm. 2. p. 966.

him, swallowed up in joy, but not forgetting us. It is not a land of oblivion in which Victor dwells. Heaven doth not harden or straiten hearts, but it maketh them more tender and compassionate: it doth not distract minds, nor alienate them from us: it doth not diminish, but it increaseth affection and charity: it augmenteth bowels of pity. The Angels, although they behold the face of their Father, visit, run, and continually assist us; and shall they now forget us who were once among us, and who once suffered themselves what they see us at present labouring under? No: *I know the just expect me till thou renderest to me my reward.*[1] Victor is not like that cup-bearer of Pharaoh, who could forget his fellow captive. He hath not so put on the stole of glory himself, as to lay aside his pity, or the remembrance of our misery." St. Victor died at Saturniac, now called Saint-Vittre, two leagues from Arcies in the diocess of Troyes.

A church was built over his tomb at Saturniac; but in 837 his relics were translated thence to the neighbouring monastery of Montier-Ramey, or Montirame, so called from Arremar, by whom it was founded in 837. It is situated four leagues from Troyes, of the Benedictin Order, and is still possessed of this sacred treasure. At the request of these monks, St. Bernard composed an office of St. Victor, extant in his works, (ep. 312. vet. ed. seu 398. nov. edit.) See the two sermons of St. Bernard on St. Victor, and his ancient life in Henschenius and others: From which it appears that this saint never was a monk, never having professed any monastic Order, though he led an eremitical life.

FEBRUARY XXVII.

ST. LEANDER, BISHOP OF SEVILLE, C.

From St. Isidore of Seville, St. Gregory the Great, and St. Gregory of Tours.

D. 596.

St. Leander was of an illustrious family, and born at Carthagena in Spain. He had two bro-

1 Ps. cxli. 8.

thers, St. Fulgentius, bishop of Ecija and Carthagena, and St. Isidore, our saint's successor in the see of Seville. He had also one sister, Florentia by name, who had consecrated herself to God in the state of virginity. He set them an example of that piety which they faithfully imitated. He entered into a monastery very young, where he lived many years and attained to an eminent degree of virtue, and sacred learning. These qualities occasioned his being promoted to the see of Seville: but his change of condition made little or no alteration in his method of life, though it brought on him a great increase of care and solicitude for the salvation of those whom God had put under his care, as well as for the necessities of the whole church, that of Spain in particular. This kingdom was then possessed by the Visigoths, or Western-goths; who, while Theodoric settled the Ostrogoths, or Eastern-goths, in Italy, had passed the Alps, and founded their kingdom, first in Languedoc, and soon after, about the year 470, in Spain. These Goths, being for the generality all infected with Arianism, established this heresy wherever they came; so that when St. Leander was made bishop, it had reigned in Spain a hundred years. This was his great affliction: however, by his tears and prayers to God, and by his most zealous and unwearied endeavours both at home and abroad, he became the happy instrument of the conversion of that nation to the catholic faith. But he suffered much from king Leovigild on this account, and was at length forced into banishment; the saint having converted, among others, Hermenegild, the king's eldest son and heir apparent. This pious prince his unnatural father put to death the year following, for refusing to receive the communion from the hands of an Arian bishop. But, touched with remorse not long after, he recalled our saint, and falling sick and finding himself past hopes of re-

covery, he sent for St. Leander, whom he had so much persecuted, and recommended to him his son Recared, whom he left his successor, to be instructed in the true faith; though out of fear of his people, as St. Gregory laments, he durst not embrace it himself. His son Recared, by listening to St. Leander, soon became a Catholic. The king also spoke with so much wisdom on the controverted points to the Arian bishops, that by the force of his reasoning, rather than by his authority, he brought them over to own the truth of the catholic doctrine; and thus he converted the whole nation of the Visigoths. He was no less successful in the like pious endeavours with respect to the Suevi, a people of Spain, whom his father Leovigild had perverted. It was a subject of great joy to the whole church to behold the wonderful blessing bestowed by Almighty God on the labours of our saint, but to none more than St. Gregory the Great, who wrote to St. Leander to congratulate him on the subject.

This holy prelate was no less zealous in the reformation of manners, than in restoring the purity of faith; and he planted the seeds of that zeal and fervour which afterward produced so many martyrs and saints. His zeal in this regard appeared in the good regulations set on foot with this intent in the council of Seville, which was called by him, and of which he was, as it were, the soul. In 589, he assisted at the third council of Toledo, of seventy-two bishops, or their deputies, in which were drawn up twenty-three canons relating to discipline, to repair the breaches the Arian heresy had made in fomenting disorders of several kinds. One of these was, that the Arian clergy cohabited with their wives; but the council forbade such of them as were converted to do so, enjoining them a separation from the same chamber, and, if possible, from the same house.[1]

1 Conc. t. 5. p. 998.

This council commanded also the rigorous execution of all penitential canons without any abatement. The pious cardinal D'Aguirre has written a learned dissertation on this subject.[1]

St. Leander, sensible of the importance of prayer, which is in a devout life what a spring is in a watch, or the main wheel in an engine, laboured particularly to encourage true devotion in all persons, but particularly those of the monastic profession, of which state it is the very essence and constituent. His letter to his sister Florentina, a holy virgin, is called his Rule of a Monastic Life. It turns chiefly on the contempt of the world, and on the exercises of prayer. This saint also reformed the Spanish liturgy.[2] In this liturgy, and in the third council of Toledo, in conformity to the eastern churches, the Nicene creed was appointed to be read at mass to ex-

1 Diss. 8. in Conc. Hisp.

2 The church of Spain first received the faith from Rome, as pope Innocent I. informs us. (Ep. ad. Decent.) Whence St. Isidore says their divine office was instituted by St. Peter, (l. 1. c. 15. Eccl. Offic.) Their ceremonies and discipline, as of fasting on Saturdays, and other rites mentioned in their councils, are Roman. And the Roman liturgy was used in Africa beyond Spain. But the Goths used a liturgy formed by Ulphilas from the Orientals. St. Leander is said to have compiled a liturgy from both, and also from the Gallish and oriental liturgies: St. Isidore and St. Ildefonse perfected it. When the Saracens or Arabians became masters of Spain, the Christians of that country were called Mixt-Arabs, and their liturgy, Mozarabic. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries this liturgy gave place to the Roman. Cardinal Ximenes re-established the daily use of the Mozarabic in a chapel of the cathedral of Toledo: it is also used in the same city by seven old Mozarabic churches, but on the days of their patrons only. See Le Brun, liturg. t. 2. p. 272. F. Flores thinks the Mozarabic liturgy was that of the Roman and African churches retained by St. Leander, without any alteration or mixture from the Orientals, except certain very inconsiderable rites. See his Spana Sagrada, t. 3. Diss. de la Missa Antigua de Espagna, p. 187, 198, &c. But though it much resembles it, we are assured by F. Burriel, the learned Jesuit, in his letter on the literary monuments found in Spain, that in some parts there are considerable differences. We shall be fully informed of this, also what masses were added by St. Ildefonse, and of other curious particulars, when we are favoured with the collections he has made from the Gothic MSS. in Spain on this subject, and the new edition of all the liturgies of Christian Churches which the Assemani are preparing at Rome in fifteen volumes folio. The Mozarabic liturgy has been printed at Rome in folio by the care of F. Lesley, a Scotch Jesuit.

press a detestation of the Arian heresy. Other western churches, with the Roman, soon imitated this devotion. St. Leander was visited by frequent distempers, particularly the gout, which St. Gregory, who was often afflicted with the same, writing to him, calls a favour and mercy of heaven. This holy doctor of Spain died about the year 596, on the 27th of February, as Mabillon proves from his epitaph. The church of Seville has been a metropolitan see ever since the third century. The cathedral is the most magnificent, both as to structure and ornament, of any in all Spain.

The contempt of the world which the gospel so strongly inculcates, and which St. Leander so eminently practised and taught, is the foundation of a spiritual life; but is of far greater extent than most Christians conceive, for it requires no less than a total disengagement of the affections from earthly things. Those whom God raises to perfect virtue, and closely unites to himself, must cut off and put away every thing that can be an obstacle to this perfect union. Their will must be thoroughly purified from all dross of inordinate affections before it can be perfectly absorbed in his. This they who are particularly devoted to the divine service, are especially to take notice of. If this truth was imprinted in the manner that it ought, in the hearts of those who enrol themselves in the service of the church, or who live in cloisters, they would be replenished with heavenly blessings, and the church would have the comfort of seeing apostles of nations revive amongst her clergy, and the monasteries again filled with Antonys, Bennets, and Bernards; whose sanctity, prayers, and example would even infuse into many others the true spirit of Christ amidst the desolation and general blindness of this unhappy age.

SS. JULIAN, CHRONION, AND BESAS, MM.

When the persecution of Decius filled the city of Alexandria with dread and terror, many, especially among the nobles, the rich, and those who held any places in the state, sacrificed to idols, but pale and trembling, so as to show they had neither courage to die, nor heart to sacrifice. Several generous soldiers repaired the scandal given by these cowards. Julian who was grievously afflicted with the gout, and one of his servants, called Chronion, were set on the backs of camels, and cruelly scourged through the whole city and at length were consumed by fire. Besas a soldier was beheaded.

See St. Dionysius of Alex. in Eusebius, l. 6. c. 41. ed Val.

ST. THALILÆUS, A CILICIAN.

He lived a recluse on a mountain in Syria, and shut himself up ten years in an open cage of wood. Theodoret asked him why he had chosen so singular a practice. The penitent answered, "I punish my criminal body, that God, seeing my affliction for my sins, may be moved to pardon them, and to deliver me from, or at least to mitigate the excessive torments of the world to come, which I have deserved." See Theodoret, Phil. c. 28. John Mosch in the Spiritual Meadow, c. 59. p. 872, relates that Thalilæus, the Cilician, spent sixty years in an ascetic life, weeping almost without intermission; and that he used to say to those that came to him, "Time is allowed us by the divine mercy for repentance and satisfaction, and woe to us if we neglect it."

ST. GALMIER, IN LATIN, BALDOMERUS.

He was a locksmith in Lyons, who lived in great poverty and austerity, and spent all his leisure moments in holy reading and prayer. He gave his gains to the poor, and sometimes even his tools. He repeated to every one, "In the name of the Lord let us always give thanks to God." Vivencius, abbot of St. Justus, (afterward archbishop of Lyons,) admired his devotion in the church, but was more edified and astonished when he had conversed with him. He gave him a cell in his monastery, in which the servant of God sanctified himself still more and more by all the exercises of holy solitude, and by his penitential labour. He died a subdeacon about the year 650.

His relics were very famous for miracles, and a celebrated pilgrimage, till they were scattered in the air by the Hugonots, in the sixteenth century. The Roman Martyrology names him on the day of his death, the 27th of February.

ST. NESTOR, B. M.

Epolius, whom the emperor Decius had appointed governor of Lycia, Pamphylia, and Phrygia, sought to make his court to that prince by surpassing his colleagues in the rage and cruelty with which he persecuted the meek disciples of Christ. At that time Nestor, bishop of Sida in Pamphylia, (as Le Quieu demonstrates, not of Perge, or of Mandis, or Madigis, as some by mistake affirm,) was distinguished in those parts for his zeal in propagating the faith, and for the sanctity of his life. His reputation reached the governor, who sent an Irenarch to apprehend him. The martyr was conducted to Perge, and there crucified, in imitation of the Redeemer of the world, whom he preached. His triumph happened in 250. His Latin Acts are to be corrected by those in Greek.

ST. ALNOTH, ANCHORET, M.

WEDON, in Northamptonshire, was honoured with a palace of Wulphere, king of Mercia, in the middle of England, and was bestowed by that prince upon his daughter St. Wereburge, who converted it into a monastery. Alnoth was the bailiff of St. Wereburge in that country. and the perfect imitator of her heroic virtues. After her retreat he led an anchoretical life in that neighbourhood, and was murdered by robbers in his solitude. His relics were kept with veneration in the church of the village of Stow, near Wedon. Wilson places his festival on the 27th of February, in the first edition of his English Martyrology, and in the second on the 25th of November. See the life of St. Wereburge, which Camden sent to F. Roseweide, written as it seems by Jocelin. See also Harpsfield.

FEBRUARY XXVIII.

MARTYRS WHO DIED IN THE GREAT PESTILENCE IN ALEXANDRIA.

From Eusebius, Hist. l. 7. c. 21, 22. p. 266.

A. D. 261, 262, 263.

A VIOLENT pestilence laid waste the greatest part of the Roman empire during twelve years, from 249 to 263. Five thousand persons died of it in one day in Rome, in 262. St. Dionysius of Alexandria relates that a cruel sedition and civil war had filled that city with murders and tumults; so that it was safer to travel from the eastern to the western parts of the then known world, than to go from one street of Alexandria to another. The pestilence succeeded this first

scourge, and with such violence, that there was not a single house in that great city which entirely escaped it, or which had not some dead to mourn for. All places were filled with groans, and the living appeared almost dead with fear. The noisome exhalations of carcasses, and the very winds, which should have purified the air, loaded with infection and pestilential vapours from the Nile, increased the evil. The fear of death rendered the heathens cruel towards their nearest relations. As soon as any of them had catched the contagion, though their dearest friends, they avoided and fled from them as their greatest enemies. They threw them half dead into the streets, and abandoned them without succour; they left their bodies without burial, so fearful were they of catching that mortal distemper, which, however, it was very difficult to avoid, notwithstanding all their precautions. This sickness, which was the greatest of calamities to the pagans, was but an exercise and trial to the Christians, who showed on that occasion, how contrary the spirit of charity is to the interestedness of self-love. During the persecutions of Decius, Gallus, and Valerian, they durst not appear, but were obliged to keep their assemblies in solitudes, or in ships tossed on the waves, or in infected prisons, or the like places, which the sanctity of our mysteries made venerable. Yet in the time of this public calamity, most of them, regardless of the danger of their own lives in assisting others, visited, relieved, and attended the sick and comforted the dying. They closed their eyes, carried them on their shoulders, laid them out, washed their bodies, and decently interred them, and soon after shared the same fate themselves; but those who survived still succeeded to their charitable office, which they paid to the very pagans their persecutors. "Thus," adds St. Dionysius, "the best of our

brethren have departed this life; some of the most valuable, both of priests, deacons, and laics; and it is thought that this kind of death is in nothing different from martyrdom." And the Roman martyrology says, the religious faith of pious Christians honours them as martyrs.

In these happy victims of holy charity we admire how powerfully perfect virtue, and the assured expectation of eternal bliss, raises the true Christian above all earthly views. He who has always before his eyes the incomprehensible happiness of enjoying God in his glory, and seriously considers the infinite advantage, peace, and honour annexed to his divine service; he who is inflamed with an ardent love of God, and zeal for his honour, sets no value on any thing but in proportion as it affords him a means of improving his spiritual stock, advancing the divine honour, and more perfectly uniting his soul to God by every heroic virtue: disgraces, dangers, labour, pain, death, loss of goods or friends, and every other sacrifice here become his gain and his greatest joy. That by which he most perfectly devotes himself to God, and most speedily and securely attains to the bliss of possessing him, he regards as his greatest happiness.

ST. PROTERIUS, PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA, M.

He was ordained priest by St. Cyril, but opposed Dioscorus, his successor, on his patronizing Eutyches, and giving into his errors, notwithstanding his endeavour to gain him to his interest, by making him archpriest, and intrusting him with the care of his church. Dioscorus being condemned and deposed by the council of Chalcedon, Proterius was elected in his room,

and was accordingly ordained and installed in 552. The people of Alexandria, famed for riots and tumults, then divided; some demanding the return of Dioscorus, others supporting Proterius. The factious party was headed by two vicious ecclesiastics, Timothy, surnamed Elurus, and Peter Mongus, whom the saint had canonically excommunicated. And so great and frequent were the tumults and seditions they raised against him, that during the whole course of his pontificate he was never out of danger of falling a sacrifice to the schismatical party, regardless both of the imperial orders and decisions of the council of Chalcedon. In the height of one of these tumults, Elurus, having caused himself to be ordained by two bishops of his faction, that had been formerly deposed, took possession of the episcopal throne, and was proclaimed by his party the sole lawful bishop of Alexandria. But being soon after driven out of the city by the imperial commander, this so inflamed the Eutychian party, that their bare-faced attempts obliged the holy patriarch to take sanctuary in the baptistery adjoining to the church of St. Quirinus, where the schismatical rabble breaking in, they stabbed him on Good-Friday, in the year 557. Not content with this, they dragged his dead body through the whole city, cut it in pieces, burnt it, and scattered the ashes in the air. The bishops of Thrace, in a letter to the emperor Leo, soon after his death, declared that they placed him among the martyrs, and hoped to find mercy through his intercession. Sanctissimum Proterium in ordine et choro sanctorum martyrum ponimus, et ejus intercessionibus misericordem et propitium Deum nobis fieri postulamus. Conc. t. 4. p. 907. His name occurs in the Greek calendars on the 28th of February. See Evagrius.

SS. ROMANUS AND LUPICINUS, ABBOTS.

ROMANUS at thirty-five years of age left his relations, and spent some time in the monastery of Ainay, (called in Latin Athanacense,) at Lyons, at the great church at the conflux of the Saone and Rhone, which the faithful had built over the ashes of the famous martyrs of that city; for their bodies being burnt by the pagans, their ashes were thrown into the Rhone, but a great part of them was gathered by the Christians, and deposited in this place. Romanus, a short time after took with him the institutions and conferences of Cassian, and retired into the forests of mount Jura, between France and Switzerland, and fixed his abode at a place called Condate, at the conflux of the rivers Bienne and Aliere, where he found a spot of ground fit for culture, and some trees which furnished him with a kind of wild fruit. Here he spent his time in praying, reading, and labouring for his subsistence. Lupicinus his brother came to him some time after in company with others, who were followed by several more, drawn by the fame of the virtue and miracles of these two saints. Here they built the monastery of Condate, and, their numbers increasing, that of Leuconne, two miles distant to the North, and, on a rock, a nunnery called La Beaume (now St. Romain de la Roche) which no men were allowed ever to enter, and where St. Romanus chose his burial place. The brothers governed the monks jointly and in great harmony, though Lupicinus was more inclined to severity of the two. He usually resided at Leuconne with one hundred and fifty monks The brethren at Condate, when they were enriched with many lands, changed their diet, which was only bread made of barley and bran, and pulse dressed often without salt or oil, and brought to table wheat-bread,

fish, and variety of dishes. Lupicinus being informed hereof by Romanus, came to Condate on the sixth day after this innovation, and corrected the abuse. The abstinence which he prescribed his monks was milder than that practised by the oriental monks, and by those of Lerins, partly because the Gauls were naturally great eaters, and partly because they were employed in very hard manual labour. But they never touched fowls or any flesh-meat, and only were allowed milk and eggs in time of sickness. Lupicinus, for his own part, used no other bed than a chair or a hard board; never touched wine, and would scarce ever suffer a drop either of oil or milk to be poured on his pulse. In summer his subsistence for many years was only hard bread moistened in cold water, so that he could eat it with a spoon. His tunic was made of various skins of beasts sown together, with a cowl: he used wooden shoes, and wore no stockings unless when he was obliged to go out of the monastery. St. Romanus died about the year 460, and is mentioned in the Roman Martyrology on the 28th of February. St. Lupicinus survived him almost twenty years, and is honoured in the Roman Martyrology on the 21st of March. He was succeeded in the abbacy of Condate by Minaucius, who, in 480, chose St. Eugendus his coadjutor.

See the lives of the two brothers, compiled by a monk of Condate of the same age.

FEBRUARY XXIX.

ST. OSWALD,[1]

BISHOP OF WORCESTER AND ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

A. D. 992.

St. Oswald was nephew to St. Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, and to Oskitell, bishop first of Dorcester, afterward of York. He was educated by St. Odo, and made dean of Winchester; but passing into France, took the monastic habit at Fleury. Being recalled to serve the church, he succeeded St. Dunstan in the see of Worcester about the year 959. He shone as a bright star in this dignity, and established a monastery of monks at Westberry, a village in his diocess. He was employed by duke Aylwin in superintending his foundation of the great monastery of Ramsey, in an island formed by marshes and the River Ouse in Huntingdonshire, in 972. St. Oswald was made archbishop of York in 974, and he dedicated the church of Ramsey under the names of the Blessed Virgin, St. Benedict, and all holy virgins. Nothing of this rich mitred abbey remains standing except an old gate-house, and a neglected statue of the founder, Aylwin, with keys and a ragged staff in his hand to denote his office; for he was cousin to the glorious king Edgar, the valiant general of his armies, and the chief judge and magistrate of the kingdom, with the title of alderman of England, and half king,

1 From his life wrote by Eadmer; also from Florence of Worcester, William of Malmesbury, and, above all, the elegant and accurate author of the history of Ramsey, published by the learned Mr. Gale, p. 385. The life of this saint, wrote by Folcard, abbot of Thorney in 1068, Wharton thinks not extant Mabillon doubts whether it be not that which we have in Capgrave and Surius. See also Portiforium S. Oswaldi Archiep. Eborac. Codex MS. crassus in 8vo. exarates circa annum 1064, in Bennet College, Cambridge, mentioned b Waneley, Catal. p. 110.

as the historian of Ramsey usually styles him.[1] St. Oswald was almost always occupied in visiting his diocess, preaching without intermission, and reforming abuses. He was a great encourager of learning and learned men. St. Dunstan obliged him to retain the see of Worcester with that of York. Whatever intermission his function allowed him he spent it at St. Mary's, a church and monastery of Benedictins, which he had built at Worcester, where he joined with the monks in their monastic exercises. This church from that time became the cathedral. The saint, to nourish in his heart the sentiments of humility and charity, had everywhere twelve poor persons at his table, whom he served, and also washed and kissed their feet. After having sat thirty-three years he fell sick at St. Mary's in Worcester, and having received the Extreme-unction, and Viaticum, continued in prayer, repeating often, "Glory be to the Father," &c., with which words he expired amidst his monks, on the 29th of February, 992. His body was taken up ten years after and enshrined, by Adulph his successor, and was illustrated by miracles. It was afterward translated to York on the 15th of October, which day was appointed his principal festival.

St. Oswald made quick progress in the path of perfect virtue, because he studied with the utmost earnestness to deny himself and his own will, listening attentively to that fundamental maxim of the Eternal Truth which St. Bennet, of whose holy order he became a bright light, repeats with great energy. This holy founder declares in the close of his rule, that, He who desires to give himself up to God, must trample all earthly things under his feet, renounce every thing that is not God, and die to all earthly affections, so as

1 See *Note*, page 320.

to attain to a perfect disengagement and nakedness of heart, that God may fill and entirely possess it, in order to establish therein the kingdom of his grace and pure love for ever. And in his prologue he cries out aloud, that he addresses himself only to him who is firmly resolved in all things to deny his own will, and to hasten with all diligence to arrive at his heavenly kingdom.

Note —The titles of honour amongst our Saxon aneestors were, Etheling, prince of the blood: chancellor, assistant to the king in giving judgments: alderman, or ealderman, (not earldorman, as Rapin Thoyras writes this word in his first edition,) governor or viceroy. It is derived from the word Ald or old, like senator in Latin. Provinces, cities, and sometimes wapentakes, had their alderman to govern them, determine law-suits, judge eriminals, &c. This office gave place to the title of earl, which was merely Danish, and introduced by Canute. Shcriffe or she-reeve, was the deputy of the alderman, chosen by him, sat judge in some courts, and saw sentence executed; hence he was called vicecomes. Heartoghan signified, among our Saxon ancestors, generals of armies, or dukes. Hengist, in the Saxon chronicle, is heartogh, such were the dukes appointed by Constantine the Great, to command the forces in the different provinces of the Roman Empire. These titles began to become hereditary with the offices or command annexed nnder Pepin and Charlemagne. and grew more frequent by the successors of these princes granting many hereditary fiefs to noblemen, to which they annexed titular dignities. Fiefs were an establishment of the Lombards, from whom the emperors of Germany, and the kings of France, borrowed this cus om, and with it the feudal laws, of which no mention is found in the Roman code. Titles began frequently to become merely honorary about the time of Otho I. in Germany.

Reeve among the English Saxons was a steward. The bishop's reeve was a bishop's steward for secular affairs, attending in his court. Thanes, *i. e.*, servants, were offices of the crown whom the king recompensed with lands, sometimes to descend to their posterity, but always to be held of him with some obligation of service, homage, or acknowledgment. There were other lords of lands and vassals, who enjoyed the title of thanes, and were distinguished from the king's thanes. The ealdermen and dukes were all king's thanes, and all others who held lands of the king by knight's service in chief, and were immediate great tenants of the king's estates. These were the greater thanes, and were succeeded by the barons, which title was brought in by the Normans, and is rarely found before the Conqueror. Mass thanes were those who held lands in fee of the church. Middle thanes were such as held very small estates of the king, or parcels of lands of the king's greater thanes. They were called by the Normans vavassors, and their lands vavassories. They who held lands of these were thanes of the lowest class, and did not rank as gentlemen. All thanes disposed of the lands which they held (and which were called Blockland) to their heirs, but with the obligations due to those of whom they were held. Ceorle (whence our word churl) was a country man or artisan, who was a freeman. Those ceorles who held land

in leases, were called sockmen, and their lands sockland, of which they could not dispose, being barely tenants. Those ceorles who acquired possession of five hides of land with a large house, court, and bell to call together their servants, were raised to the rank of thanes of the lowest class. An hide of land was as much as one plough could till. The villains or slaves in the country were labourers, bound to the service of particular persons; were all capable of possessing money in property, consequently were not strictly slaves in the sense of the Roman law.

Witan or Wites, (*i. e.* wisemen,) were the magistrates and lawyers. Burghwitten signified the magistrates of cities. Some shires (or counties) are mentioned before king Alfred; and Asserius speaks of earls (or counts) of Somerset, and Devonshire, in the reign of Ethelwo[illegible] But Alfred first divided the whole kingdom into shires, the shires into tithings, lathes, or wapentacks, the tithings into hundreds, and the hundreds into tenths. Each division had a court subordinate to those that were superior, the highest in each shire being the shire-gemot, or folck-mote, which was held twice a year, and in which the bishop or his deputy, and the ealderman, or his vicegerent the sheriff, presided. See Seldon on the Titles of Honour; Spelman's Glossary, ed. noviss. Squires on the Government of the English Saxons. Dr. William Howel, in his learned General History, t. 5. p. 273, &c. N. B. The titles of earle and hersen were first given by Ifwar Widfame, king of Sweden, to two ministers of state, in 824; on which see many remarks of Olof Delin, in his excellent new history of Sweden, c. 5. t. 1. p. 334.

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